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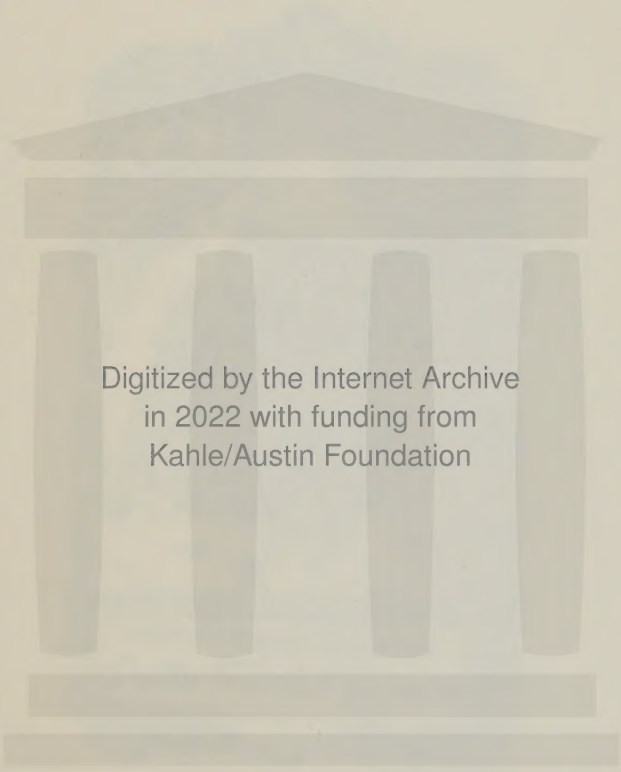
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THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE

AND

THEOLOGICAL REVIEW.

NEW SERIES.....VOL. V.

For 1823.

"*Speaking the truth in love.*"—ST. PAUL.

BOSTON:

WELLS AND LILLY, COURT-STREET.

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1823.

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THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

NEW SERIES—No. 25.

January and February, 1823.

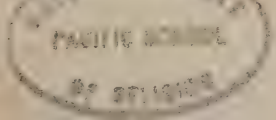
A CONSIDERATION OF SOME OBJECTIONS TO RATIONAL CHRISTIANITY, AS NOT BEING A RELIGION FOR THE POOR.

It is sometimes confidently asserted, that the views of religion which are held by rational christians, (as they are termed by way of distinction,) are not adapted to the ignorant and unlettered part of the community: that, in a word, our religion is not a religion for the poor. If this objection were founded in truth, it should have great weight; and, as much as almost any thing, would lead us to distrust the principles which we receive. But we are persuaded that the contrary is the fact; and we will state some of the grounds of that persuasion.

I. It is objected, in the first place, that our religious belief is not sufficiently defined to be made the ground of instruction with the ignorant; and that they require a system, which is exact and tangible.

We acknowledge, that there would be a great convenience in having a complete formulary of faith; and in being able to show with precision what men ought to believe on every topic of religious inquiry; but we think there exists with us in this respect no very objectionable deficiency.

The most elaborate creeds are a poor substitute for knowledge and study of which they commonly take the place. That faith, which is the result of study and reflection, is of a more practical character, than that, which is implicitly received upon authority only. Creeds are hostile to inquiry, and so present a great impediment to religious knowledge; for what use or motives are there for inquiry, when nothing more remains to be discovered?



These remarks apply to the unlearned as well as to others; for if they are capable of any religious belief, which will be useful, they are capable of reflection and inquiry; and every inducement should be offered them to study their duty and their relations, to enlighten their consciences and to judge for themselves what is right. Among persons of this description we not unfrequently meet with a soundness and maturity of religious principles, which may well put to shame many, whose advantages have been much superior.

Again, in respect to many topicks of religion, the knowledge of which is desirable, and upon which most of us have formed some opinion, we cannot speak with any positiveness. They are subjects in which the terms that we employ are partially comprehended by us; or if the terms, which are used, are understood, yet our knowledge is so imperfect as to leave us quite at a loss how to reason upon them; and still more as to what we shall peremptorily inculcate on the belief of others. Diffidence and a considerable distrust in regard to our most elaborate conclusions on subjects, which are incomprehensible, is indicative of true wisdom. Whatever is connected with the modes of the divine existence, the infinity of God, or the operations of his physical or moral government, has an abstruseness, which human sagacity in its most profound researches cannot fathom. The efforts of human genius, when applied to many of these subjects, serves like a lamp in a very dark night, only to render the deep obscurity around us more palpable.

What use then, we may ask, would come of inculcating opinions on subjects which are absolutely mysterious? Certainly such pretence of belief can have no practical influence. We say pretence of belief; for all assent to doctrines absolutely mysterious, is mere pretence of belief. Men can no more be said to believe an unintelligible proposition, than they can be said to believe a proposition expressed in a foreign language, not a word of which do they understand.

But though we deem it no objectionable deficiency to our views of religion, that they present not a complete system of faith, to which nothing is to be added and from which nothing is to be taken, as though no more light was ever to break forth from God's word or works; and which, in order to salvation, is to be alike implicitly received by all men, whether they can understand it or not; and though we have no opinions to offer on many subjects, upon which some christians speak with a peremptoriness and obstinacy, proportioned only to the difficulty and utter incomprehensibleness of the subjects themselves, reminding one of the faith of an ancient father, who believed, he said,

because the doctrine was impossible; yet we cannot admit that our faith is without form and substance; nor that it does not embrace many principles, which are deeply interesting, and essentially connected with human virtue and happiness. We believe in God, the sovereign and father of all beings and all worlds; in his sublime, adorable, and unqualified perfection; in his moral government; in his universal providence; in the fact of his having had direct communications with mankind; in Jesus Christ, as the honoured instrument and organ of those communications; in the scriptures, as containing their amount and tenor; we believe in the moral character and moral responsibility of man; in his destination to a future and an immortal life; and in an ultimate and complete retribution. It is not necessary here to enter more into detail; but on these topicks our principles are fixed, and intelligible to the humblest capacity; they are indicated in nature; they are approved by reason; they are fully illustrated and confirmed in revelation. The teachings of revelation are coincident with the dictates of reason and conscience. We affirm that they embrace every principle of religious belief, which has any connexion with duty and virtue. It cannot be said then that we have not a system of belief, to inculcate upon those whom we teach, as definite as human knowledge can make it; intelligible to every mind capable of reflection; and as practical as can be imagined. If still it be required of us to inculcate a more exact or complete system of belief, we answer only, that when we find such a system in the teachings of Jesus or the writings of his apostles, we will implicitly and confidently teach it in their words and on their authority.

II. We proceed to remark that a religion for the poor, the ignorant, the unlearned, should be practical;—and this we may say of the views of rational christians, that they are practical in the fullest sense of the term. No religion, no rule of life can be more serious and strict than that which we believe and teach.

We should be unwilling to make any invidious or censorious comparisons; but with respect to a religious system, which teaches that man can do nothing towards his salvation; that human virtue has no merit in the sight of God; that indeed all the actions of those persons, who are not miraculously converted, are sinful; that every attempt towards the amelioration of our moral character is in vain, and worse than in vain; that God's favour here, and the condition, in which we shall be placed hereafter, will bear no reference to our moral character; we are at a loss to conceive how such a system can be in any sense of the term denominated a practical religion. We are prompt to acknowledge that among the friends of these sentiments, there are

many of distinguished piety and virtue; but this is not the consequence of such principles.

With respect to the religion which we teach, we maintain that its great object is to make men good; that the observance of any forms, or the possession of any faith is of no importance other or farther than as it contributes to this object. We maintain indeed, as a principle of the highest moment, that there exists an indissoluble connexion between our character and condition; that our happiness or misery, in a future life, will not be a matter of arbitrary and capricious sovereignty on the part of God, but the natural and necessary consequence of our virtue or vice; and that men will be happy or miserable in exact proportion as they are good or bad. We call upon men to repent of their sins and to practice virtue, and never to think that they have done enough so long as any thing remains to be done. We maintain that they have the power of doing what the will of God requires of them; and we present them the strongest inducements to exert this power. We maintain, in fine that the choice of life and death, of happiness or misery, of heaven or hell is presented to every man; and that the momentous decision rests upon his own exertions and attainments; that every action of our lives will be brought into judgment and must produce its own proper fruits. We maintain, that religion is in the fullest sense of the term a rule of life, applicable and designed to be applied to all the actions and circumstances of life; which must mingle with all our pleasures and employments, with all our sufferings and trials; which must guide all our steps, counsel us whenever we need counsel, be the constant companion of our waking hours and repose with us on our pillows, assist us in fine, whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God.

III. It is objected to our views of religion, in the third place, that they have not enough of terror in them; and that they are deficient in those sanctions of obedience, which inspire in the hearts of the guilty, alarm and horror. This deserves consideration; God forbid that we should in any way weaken the motives to virtue or lessen the fears of sin.

We do not hesitate then on this subject to employ any of the language of the scriptures; though we think no intelligent reader of the scriptures will doubt that much of their impressive language in regard to a future judgment, and the coming of the son of man in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and the sounding of the trumpet of the archangel, and the assembling of the universe at the judgment seat of God, and the separation of the righteous and the wicked as a shepherd divideth his

sheep from the goats, is language of a highly figurative and scenical nature; and that the casting out into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, and the unquenchable fire of hell or the valley of Hinnom, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched, is language drawn from an allusion to well known facts and customs among the Jews. This language, which addresses itself so powerfully to the imagination, is intended only to impress more forcibly upon the heart the great principles and truths, which it imbodies forth. It was language particularly adapted to the times when and to the people to whom it was addressed.

Further, we are compelled to remark, that as we are not believers in the inspiration of the author of Paradise Lost, and cannot admit the doctrine that God shares the empire of the universe with a being as malignant as he himself is benevolent, and as omnipotent in evil as he himself is omnipotent in good, we are not able to employ in our representations of the future consequences of sin all that diabolical machinery, by which the discourses of many, who believe in no more dreadful retribution than we do ourselves, are so often bristled and inflamed. We are further of an opinion that in all cases that language is most impressive, which is the language of the times; and that when we venture to use the language of the imagination, and especially on subjects of so serious a character as those to which we now refer, we should have regard to the prevalent state of feeling, sentiment, and knowledge in the community. If we wished to impress an assembly of North-American savages with the pains of hell, we might show them a miserable victim, stripped, lacerated and scalped, fastened to the stake, his body pierced with pine splinters, the faggots kindling, his eyes starting with agony, the smoke of his torments slowly curling around him; and in those frightful intervals, when the yell of his barbarous executioners was suppressed, we might call upon them to observe the writhings of his torture and to let his shrieks of horror enter into their souls; it would be to them a picture of distress, in which they would deeply sympathise. But, in a community, which in its humblest departments, is so enlightened and improved as our own, any such representations, though presenting an image of the miseries of hell by no means too highly coloured, would be received with so much disgust and incredulity as to fail entirely of producing the effect at which we aim. But when men are reminded that they are responsible to God, who knows every thing and forgets nothing of all which they do, or say, or think, or feel; that hereafter the whole history of their lives must be disclosed; that they will carry with them the character which they

have formed here; that they must then perceive and feel what they have done, what they have been, and what they are; that conscience aroused, purged, and armed with vengeance will then do its office most faithfully; and they will be made to see in its darkest colours the odiousness, the folly, the infamy, the ingratitude and baseness of sin; and observe that they have gained nothing and that they have lost every thing; that their doom is now sealed; that all is now over with them; regret comes too late; that the disastrous consequences of their sins are unlimited and irretrievable, and that they are now left to feed upon them and upon them alone in all their bitterness;—if they are not moved by such doctrines, it cannot be because these doctrines have no terror in them; for with these mental agonies, these moral privations, what physical sufferings can bear a comparison? If they are not moved by them, it is because they have no understanding to discern between things that differ, and no heart to feel this difference. If such doctrines as these, which are the doctrines of rational christians, have no terror in them for the guilty and impenitent, we know not what is terrible; and these doctrines, being simple, and rational, and perfectly conformable to all their present experience so far as it is applicable to the subject, cannot fail to be more impressive upon every mind, which is capable of understanding them, than any representations on these subjects of a sensible or metaphorical nature.

IV. It is objected, in the fourth place, that our religious views are too abstract, in the technical sense of the term too philosophical, have too little to do with the affections to be a religion for the poor.

We are persuaded that it is with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; that any religious belief which ends in speculation only, will be of little use as a practical principle. Our religion, in order to become a rule of life, must be not merely the assent of the understanding, but a deep persuasion of the heart; a principle, and more than that, a sentiment; must rest not on the convictions of the judgment merely, but have its seat among our warmest and best affections. A religion of this character is particularly necessary to the unlearned; having neither the means nor the ability for religious inquiry, we can expect to bring them under the power of religion only as we engage in its behalf their feelings and affections.

Our religious views give no encouragement to mysticism or to fanaticism; but there is a profound sense of religious duty, and a holy and lofty enthusiasm, which connects itself with every thing that is connected with religion, which they are adapted to enkindle and cherish.

When our religion begins, therefore, not with teaching men in regard to the Deity, one of the boldest and most impenetrable mysteries, we need not say we refer to the doctrine of the Trinity; not with proclaiming the divine sovereignty, exercised most arbitrarily and without any regard to the moral deserts of men; not with declaring God's implacable vengeance towards his creatures, which, in order to be appeased, required the sacrifice of a perfectly good being, his dearly beloved son; but in the place of these doctrines, exhibits him as our kind father, cherishing, pitying, loving his creatures with more than parental tenderness; compassionating their frailty, pardoning their sins upon their repentance, going out indeed to meet with open arms and with unmixed kindness the returning prodigal; caring for all, blessing all, dispensing even his severest chastisements in mercy, and providing only for the virtue and the happiness of his creatures; we know of no doctrines more touching, nor how it could make a more powerful appeal to our love, confidence, gratitude, and devotion. Further, when our religion, instead of exhibiting to us a Saviour, under so mysterious, anomalous, and mixed a character, that we are at a loss how to approach him; and of so exalted and divine a nature, that we are discouraged with the thought that the example of a God is to be the measure of our duty; when, instead of such doctrines, it discovers to us a Saviour, who condescends to call us brethren, and who presents an example in human nature of what we ought to be and to do; and who, touched with the infirmities of our nature, and tempted as we are, is able to succour those who are tempted; and who is not represented as dying in an unintelligible and incomprehensible sense as God-man, but sacrificing his life in the cause of truth and duty, for the noblest ends, and in the most disinterested manner, it presents to our feelings an object adapted to call them forth in the most powerful degree; it provokes the deepest sympathy; it inspires the most profound admiration; it enkindles a noble emulation; it excites and enchains our purest and strongest affections. It is in such a Saviour that even children may be early taught to feel the deepest interest; it is to such a Saviour that the poor and uneducated will look as a source of invaluable consolation under the troubles of life, and as an infallible guide to wisdom and virtue, contentment and peace;—and it is under the government and providence of such a Father, that they will enjoy a sublime security amidst all the changes of life, an immoveable confidence in a beneficial result of all that they do and suffer here, provided that they are but faithful to themselves; and that even the most desolate and afflicted, to whom the world is only a scene of disappointment and

misery, of privation and hopelessness, will feel that they are not utterly friendless and alone.

We are aware that to a subject of this nature it is impossible to do justice within those limits, to which we are here confined. We present only the outlines of the picture, leaving the completion of it to the reflections of our readers. For the reasons, which we have stated, we think it cannot be said of the views, which we entertain of christianity, that they are not sufficiently definite and intelligible, nor practical, nor serious, nor affecting. But whether the arguments, which we urge on this subject, be or be not such as to satisfy those, who differ from us that our religion in these respects is what it ought to be, it is in our power and it is an imperative duty to give an irresistible proof of it in our lives and characters. On our own personal religion we must rest our chief hopes of recommending our principles to others.

We are compelled to hear it often asserted, that the friends of rational christianity are deficient in religious knowledge, in vital piety, in a serious regard to futurity, and in feeling and interest in religion. If it be so, it is not the fault of our principles. It does not become us to repel such reproaches by insinuations against the virtue or piety of those who differ from us—God forbid that we should ever have any satisfaction in thinking or discovering that any of our fellow christians are not so good as we could wish them to be. But it does become us to show by our lives that they have no foundation. It is an important duty with those, who have the ability and the means of religious knowledge, to settle with themselves as accurately as possible, what they believe, and on what grounds they believe it; and to form such exact views of religion, as to be able to give to every inquirer a reason for the hope that is in them. It becomes us to make our religion the supreme guide and rule of our lives. It is of no value but as it produces the fruits of virtue and piety. We should live always under a profound sense of the solemn sanctions by which its precepts are enforced; and it should be, as its doctrines are designed to render it, the subject of our deepest interests, the source of our richest consolations, and the centre, around which our affections hover with an unquenchable ardour and an inflexible constancy. Religion is the highest law of our being. Christianity is the only full and exact interpreter of this law. It comes as the equal friend of all men, of the prosperous and the afflicted, the enlightened and the unlearned, the rich and the poor, the exalted and the humble. Let us endeavour that none shall be shut out from its light, its consolations, its privileges and hopes; and especially those of our breth-

ren of the human family, to whom it seems most needed to supply the place of other blessings, which are withheld from them. It is the moral nature of man, which gives to human existence its only value; and this moral nature is the common gift of heaven to all men. It is the great object of christianity to improve this gift, and to bring man to an assimilation with that Being, who is the sum and centre of all moral excellence. By freeing it from those corruptions which have tarnished its lustre and impeded its influence, and by an exhibition of its true character, let us endeavour that none shall want its advantages and its blessings. God designed it as an universal religion; and let us not be deficient in every reasonable and possible effort to diffuse its influence into every department of human society; that it may throw a fairer splendour over its brightest scenes; and above all, that it may send its light into its most obscure recesses, and purge its most polluted places, and cause the voice of contentment and hope, of thanksgiving, devotion and joy in God and in Christ to be heard, where ignorance and poverty, vice and wretchedness have hitherto held common and undisturbed dominion. C.

A FEW RULES IN REGARD TO PRIVATE PRAYER.

I. *For every duty that we are daily to perform, there must be an alloted time of every day; and as private prayer is a duty of every day, there must be a time, or times of every day, appropriated for it.*

Some devotional writers have warmly recommended, not only the appropriation of certain times of every day for private prayer, and not alone the appropriation of a particular apartment to which we should retire for this exercise, but that there should also be *one place* in that apartment, where we should always perform the duty. The design of this is, that by the strong associations that would be formed with this place, we may be reminded, as often as we see or think of it, of the prayers we have there offered; and thus excited to maintain a spirit and conduct, corresponding with our prayers. I do not however recommend this practice, because I think that devotional associations should not be so confined to any place; because I fear, if such a habit is formed, devotional feelings will not be so easily, nor so strongly excited in other places, where we may be called to offer our prayers; and because a true spirit of prayer is not dependent on such arbitrary associations. There must indeed be a place, as well as a time, for our daily deliberate offerings of prayer. But

he who has a spirit of prayer, and specified times of every day for its particular exercise, will seldom be at a loss in regard to place. Let it, for example, be included under our first rule, that the first exercise of our thoughts and cares in the morning, and the last at night, shall be in secret communion with God. We shall then either pray as we lie in our bed; or kneel beside it when we have risen, and when we retire for rest. Here then we have provided for the regular exercise of the duty twice in every day. But every one can have, and every one should have, at least one other time of the day, in which he should retire for private prayer. The hour that is convenient to one, may be inconvenient to another. But who could not find a few minutes even in the busiest day, to ask of God the gratification of some temporal want, if he were sure that he could thus obtain it? I would ask any man who objects, that he can find no favourable opportunity for this retirement, whether equal difficulty would be felt, if by his daily prayers he could increase his property, or fame, or mere animal pleasure. And are the objects of private prayer of less interest and worth? Here then I leave the first rule; adding only, that the duty for the performance of which we have no specified time, will easily be neglected, and soon forgotten.

II. *Prayer should be preceded by at least a moment or two of recollection, and consideration of the service in which we are to engage, that we may distinctly understand our own purpose in prayer.*

Every well disposed mind will perceive at once the reasonableness of this rule, and its great importance.

No man who would obtain a character for sense, judgment and consistency, would allow himself in rash, hasty and inconsiderate language, even in the freest and most familiar intercourse. Above all, no one who feels that he is addressing, or is about to address, his superiour among men; that he is about to express his gratitude to a benefactor, or to ask a favour of one on whom he is dependent, or to acknowledge a fault for which he would ask forgiveness; could approach this superiour for either of these purposes, without first dwelling upon the purpose, and having distinctly and fully in view the object of the address he is to offer. And is less consideration to be exercised when we are about to pray? A prayer that is without object, without design, is necessarily also without spirit and life; and unproductive of any good to him that offers it. Let us ask, then, before we pray, What is our purpose? Have we the affections which we would express to God? Consider what they are. Would we give thanks to him? Consider what are the blessings for which we would express our

gratitude. Would we ask of him any good? What is that good? Do we actually want and desire to obtain of God, what we ask of him? The inquiry is very solemn, and should be brought home to our hearts,—have we never, from previous inconsideration of the objects for which we were to pray, expressed affections in prayer that we did not feel; and asked blessings from God, which we not only did not desire, but of which we have not even had a remembrance after we have prayed?

A *third* rule I would suggest is, that *when about to offer our prayers, we should ask ourselves, have I now the temper and feelings with which a christian should pray.*

Our Lord inculcates this rule when he says, *If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first, be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* And again, *When ye stand praying, forgive.*

I do not say that we should never pray, till we have the temper and feelings of christians. It may be, that the most important object for which we have to pray, is this very temper. But surely it is a great evil, surely it is little better than solemn profaneness, from day to day to offer prayers for our own forgiveness, while we are impenitently indulging an unforgiving mind; to ask from God a humble and contented spirit, and yet daily, and without shame, to be indulging pride, envy, dissatisfaction and complaint; to express all the earnestness of desire for a heart subdued to God's will, and prepared for the service and enjoyment of him in heaven, and yet to live every day in a heedless, unfeeling violation of his will, and disregard of our accountableness and immortality. If our temper and feelings are unimproved by prayer, it becomes us seriously to inquire, whether we have made it an object, when we prayed, to bring our mind to the temper of truly christian devotion. I cannot but think that, if we seriously endeavour to bring ourselves to the temper and feelings with which we should pray, that prayer will do much to strengthen and confirm the christian dispositions with which it will then be offered.

A *fourth* rule is, that *whatever we seek in prayer, we should seek with peculiar interest and earnestness for spiritual blessings.*

Consider the objects of the petitions in the Lord's prayer. With the exception, "give us this day *our daily bread*," each of these petitions is for spiritual blessings. Let us then ask of God still increasing knowledge of himself, clearer conceptions of his will, and a stronger and more prevailing sense of his authority. Let us ask for grace to know ourselves; to maintain self-government; to resist and overcome our evil propensities; and

to add to our faith all the virtue and piety of our religion. If we thus pray, we shall feel that, of the objects for which we are to live, the first, and infinitely the most important is, a heart right towards God; a conscience void of offence both towards God and man; a preparation to meet God in judgment, and to enjoy him in eternity. We should thank God every day for temporal blessings, and ask of him all that we want for our support and comfort in this world. But we should be careful to *want* most those things, in the attainment of which we shall find eternal satisfaction. Blessed are *the poor in spirit*, for *theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* Blessed are *the pure in heart*, for *they shall see God.* Blessed are *they that hunger and thirst after righteousness*, for *they shall be filled.*

I will only add a *fifth* rule; which is, that *having prayed, we should carry with us the sentiments and affections we have expressed in prayer, into the intercourse and various circumstances of our lives; always remembering that, while we depend on God for the blessings which we ask of him, he requires also our exertions, as well as our prayers, to obtain them.*

There cannot be a more delusive idea, than that we have done with our prayers when we have expressed them to God. God gives us our daily bread. But he requires as well that we should labour for it, as that we should ask it of him. And not less does he require that we should labour, as well as ask him for, the meat that endureth to everlasting life. For what is piety? Is it merely the occasional expression of a prayer? Is it not rather an habitual feeling of God's presence, and of our dependence on him; a constantly prevailing love to God, regard to his authority and approbation, and submission to his will? And are not these among the highest objects of christian prayer? And do they not demand our constant, and greatest vigilance and care, in order to maintain them? What is virtue? Is it not the triumph of the social over the selfish affections; the triumph of principle over passion; the maintenance of principle, in all our dispositions and actions, against all temptations, and in all embarrassments and difficulties? If virtue then, in its very nature, demands incessant effort to maintain it, can we consistently, or even without impiety, ask God to assist us in our exertions for christian virtue, and yet neither remember for what we have prayed, nor make an effort for its attainment? Is it not great impiety to confess our sins to God, and ask his assistance to enable us to forsake them, and yet to live from day to day in the indulgence of these sins, and without exertion for deliverance from them?

Prayer, to him that fully professes its spirit, is as the chariot of fire in which Elijah was borne to heaven. It disengages the soul

from earth, brings it into the light, and fills it with the spirit of heaven. It makes man, even here, to be an associate of angels and of glorified spirits. It gives wings to faith, which bears it to worlds and to joys that eye hath not seen. It shews to us the arm of the Everlasting, sustaining us under all our burdens. To the humble and contrite, it exhibits the throne of the Most High as a mercy seat, before which a true penitent may bow with entire assurance, that he who confesseth and forsaketh his sins, will be forgiven. And to the soul that would make God himself the source of its happiness, and the end of its desires, it whispers the answer of peace and of joy, *Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.* Every day then, and not once alone in every day, let us enter our closet; let us retire into it ourselves, and pray to our Father who is in secret. Then will our Father, who seeth and heareth in secret, reward us openly.

HINTS TO UNITARIANS.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

The peculiar circumstances of that class of christians, for whose benefit the Christian Disciple is chiefly intended, are thought to call for some suggestions, such as are offered in the following hints. The writer of these remarks deems it a privilege, and one of the greatest, to cherish their views, but is accustomed to think that their situation involves no ordinary trial of character. The suggestions which follow are such as arise from this conviction.

It is hoped that the object of these reflections, which is to hint at some of the dangers in which we stand, will not be thought to be unworthy of notice. To beings in a state of probation, whose temptations are equalled only by their weakness, whose very ignorance is exposure, to say nothing of their passions;—it would seem that the subject of their moral dangers should be one of great interest. It is striking to observe how powerfully it arrested the attention of the great masters of moral teaching—Jesus and his Apostles. The apprehension of danger to moral and religious beings is a leading feature in their instructions. Thus we find in them a considerable proportion that is of the nature of admonition. We meet, in perusing them, perpetual suggestions and phrases of caution, as 'beware—take heed.' The common topics of religious admonition are, indeed, and ought

to be, the common dangers of all times and places—the ordinary temptations, that are every day incident to life, to society, to a corporeal nature—and the common exposure, in which we stand, to the evils of a future state.

But it is undoubtedly proper at times to turn aside from these subjects to those of a more peculiar and circumstantial character. Of this again we have a striking example in the inspired teachers of christianity. Their instructions and warnings were all circumstantial;—they were, peculiarly, though by no means exclusively, adapted to the wants and dangers of men in the period in which they lived. But of the times and seasons, brethren, says Paul to the Thessalonians, ye have no need that I write to you—for ye yourselves are aware of them; as if it were a matter of course that they should consider the circumstances, the duties, the dangers of their own time and situation. But I need not specify instances of that, of which the whole bible is an example. This is particularly true, indeed, in relation to the *preceptive and speculative* parts of it. Thus it will be found, on examination, that every epistle of the New Testament was called forth by some peculiar exigency of the church; and not only so, let it be observed, but by some peculiar exigency of danger. It was not the abstract circumstance that men needed instruction, that drew forth these writings; it was, that parties arose, and difficulties multiplied in the church;—there were controversies to be settled, there were questions to be answered; the weak and wavering were to be confirmed, the lapsed were to be recovered, the vicious and schismatical were to be rebuked.

After this example it will hardly be necessary to offer any apology for *circumstantial* instruction. If it were, however, one might be found in its utility. We are creatures of circumstance. Our feelings are very much influenced, our characters are very much formed by circumstances. Our temptations in a great measure consist in them. Be it so, that ours is a religion of the spirit. But in our anxiety to regard it as spiritual, let us not make it abstract: let us not make it visionary and sentimental, in the endeavour to exalt it as sublime.

There was a certain plain dealing about religion in the early times, I had almost said, a certain homeliness of character; it was made a matter of fact, and of circumstance;—it was mixed up with the business and ordinary concerns of men, in a way that is suited to our nature, and that shows the strong and thorough hold it had on the early converts. It will always be found that where men feel a real and deep interest in religion, they take off the character of abstractness and generality from it; they perceive that it has a concern with every thing they do,

that it touches every point in the circle of their welfare and duty. It goes with them into all their pursuits and pleasures—into all their cares and perils,—and is with them as a familiar and guardian friend.

When the early christians met together, it was, indeed, to meditate on all the sublime and glorious subjects of their new faith; but it was also to consider their circumstances, to consult upon their dangers, to prepare themselves for the peculiar trials of their situation; to be exhorted and admonished, lest they should fall from their stedfastness, or grow violent amidst opposition, or become vain and extravagant,—become proud, and forgetful of God in their progress and prosperity. And when with joy, they opened one of the epistles of their beloved teacher, behold! the venerable Apostle still speaks of all these things, and exhorts and rebukes with all long suffering and doctrine.

Now, I venture to think that our religious meditations oftener need to be made thus *circumstantial*. If any one believes, that there *are* no longer circumstances of any peculiar interest, that all dangers to our faith and virtue are overpast, except those of a general kind, which beset men at all times; I think it would be easy to show him, that there are circumstances and dangers, too, that are peculiar to our own age and to our own country.

But to pass these by, for the present; I wish to invite the attention of unitarian christians, to some dangers that expose us, not as men only, nor merely as christians, but as a class of christians. Let me add that the following remarks will assume the form of discussion or of direct address as may seem most convenient in pursuing them.

The suggestions which occur in relation to this subject, are various, but they may be chiefly embraced under the two following topics, viz. Opposition and Progress. By the latter topic, I mean, now, an advancement of opinion, and not an accession of numbers: not the progress of a sect, but the progress of thought.

I have spoken of the circumstances of the early christians, and there are some respects in which ours strongly resemble them, and which bring home to our case many of the apostolic exhortations. Such are those especially which urge the duties of kindness and forbearance, and a faithful care not to compromise nor prejudice the sacred cause which we espouse. An exhortation of this kind occurs to me now, in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, which seems to me worthy of being frequently considered. Take heed, says he, lest by any means this liberty of yours, become a stumbling block to them that are weak.

We are well aware, that the liberty of thinking which we have used, as a class of christians, has drawn upon us a very general

and strong feeling of disapprobation. It was thus that some of the Corinthian christians were brought under the suspicions and dislike of their brethren. With them it was a liberty of thinking about matters that were external, about the use of food that was offered to idols. Their consciences were enlightened to perceive that it was a matter of indifference—that if they ate, they were not better, and if they did not eat, they were not worse—that in fine, meats could not commend them to God. And so we are accustomed to think of some doctrines, which are interesting to many of our brethren, that they are, at least, indifferent, and of others, that the belief of them is erroneous. And it surely is of the utmost consequence that we should be guarded from every thing, that would make this liberty of ours which we so much prize, and for which we ought to be so thankful, an occasion of offence.

Let me assure those, who may take the trouble to peruse these remarks, that they are not intended to feed the flame of religious dissension. I am aware, and I rejoice, that there is a great sensitiveness among us, that there is even a morbid aversion and disgust towards all reproachful allusions, to those who differ from us in matters of faith. And I feel, therefore, sure of your candor, when I allude to their opposition,—which so far as it is serious and well meant, is worthy of all respect—for the purpose of considering not their faults, but our dangers—of suggesting the exposure to wrong sentiments, and injurious tendencies in this situation, of exhorting to kindness, watchfulness and moderation.

And I now proceed to the general subject.

1. It is obvious to remark, in the first place, that the circumstance of that general opposition, which has been alluded to, strongly exposes us to unkind and uncharitable feelings. It is too obvious, it may be thought, to need a suggestion. But it ought to be remembered that our situation is very peculiar. Other classes of christians, indeed, have their mutual differences, and the temptation to unkindness among them, is found to be sufficiently strong. But the opposition which we experience is universal, and is founded in sentiments, (we trust they are prejudice) of almost unconquerable strength. Now our danger is just in proportion to the vehemence and universality of these sentiments.

Nor can we be so unwise as to imagine, that we enjoy any peculiar exemption from this danger. We are just as liable to be uncharitable and unkind, as others, and if we imagine that we are not, this instead of proving that we are safe, only shows that we are secure. If any one fancies that he has found refuge from this danger, in an indifference to creeds, let him remember, that in-

difference is not charity; and that probably some of the most uncharitable men in the world are precisely those who believe nothing.

Do we, then, make sufficient allowance for the honest feelings and fears of our brethren? For my own part, so far as they are disinterested and affectionate, so far as they regard the honour of religion, I respect them. And though they were altogether groundless apprehensions, the subject ought in some measure to sanctify them. I cannot help thinking that with some, it is too easy to fling out vague accusations of bigotry, intolerance, uncharitableness, &c. Evil will it be with us, if a good system of faith is made the cover of a bad habit of feeling, if we have gained a truth and lost a virtue, if we have become more correct than others, only to be more proud. But some will tell us perhaps, that *they* feel none of this exasperation—that they maintain a supreme indifference towards the opinion of their opposers. I do not believe it. It is not (unless we are indifferent to our own opinions)—it is not in our nature to feel this indifference, and it would be little credit to us if we could. Religion is a subject too important to admit of it. Violent opposition to what is believed to be the truth that God has revealed, is not to be lightly regarded. Besides it is most unhappily true, that we are all of us more or less affected by this opposition, through the relations and intercourse of life. It is, here, indeed, that it comes near to us. It is not the distant sound of the controversy that disturbs our peace. It is the chilling distrust and alienation that enters our own dwellings, and grievous to say, enters them under the sanction of religion.* There is to many an almost daily temptation from this source; and it is a temptation which no smiles nor courtesies can do away. Religion is the subject of subjects, the all-interesting theme of reflection, the great bond of friendship, the refuge for our sorrows, and the home for our best joys. Now, with those who feel such an interest in religion, it naturally forms the most interesting subject of conversation and of sympathy. And to have the cold hand of suspicion or silence

* It is painful to observe that some who are industriously, and, no doubt, sincerely preferring the charges of heresy and schism against us, are themselves, in the true sense of scripture, the real and leading schismatics and heretics in these unhappy times of religious dissension. Unitarianism was never charged with bringing coldness between friends, nor unkind dissension into families. It has brought itself under the imputation of lukewarmness, indeed, by pleading for a spirit of kindness and concord. It is another influence that has come up into the abodes of social life, and rent the bonds of friendship asunder; that has filled the minds of many with cold suspicion or superstitious horror towards men as sincere and good as themselves; that has cast a dark shade over the sweetest sympathies and brightest hopes of life. I say again, that I doubt not the sincerity of those who are helping on this ungenerous and unchristian work; but I as fully believe that Heaven looks down with pity on the course they are pursuing, as an unhappy infatuation.

laid upon it is a severe trial. Still more trying must it be to the temper, if not to the feelings, to meet with sour condolence or gruff rebuke, which will always be in proportion to the ignorance or coarseness of him who offers them. And it is a very great question, how we ought to conduct in such circumstances; or rather it is a very great matter to conduct rightly. It is a case on which every one ought to reflect deeply; it is a situation, in which every one ought to be on his guard, and to fortify his mind with all those views of religion and duty, that may preserve him from the great temptation. Think, then, let me say, think at such a time, of the meekness and gentleness of Christ; think of that great and good Being, whose mercy is over us all, and who bears with us all; think, with what earnestness we are exhorted in his word, to all gentleness and forbearance towards those that oppose themselves; think, in fine, that, in a few days more, when this separating cloud has passed away, you hope to meet those with whom you now differ, and to dwell with them forever in heaven. Think thus, and it will not be with bitterness or contempt that you will regard them.

2. In the next place, it is a very great misfortune of our situation, that we are continually put upon our own defence. Nothing can be worse for an individual, or for a body of christians, than the habit of feeling which this necessity is apt to generate. A deep sense of personal deficiencies, a wakeful jealousy, a profound humility, a disposition to see the worst of our case, are the very means of christian improvement. But it is thought to be a kind of treason against the cause for us to confess our faults, as a class of christians.

The periodical publications of all large and well established denominations of christians, you find, teem with earnest expostulations, and fearful warnings, on the deficiencies of their members. But when WE undertake any public work of this kind, it must needs be, and indeed there is but too much occasion for it, it must needs be a citadel for defence; and we are apt to feel as if we could not very closely pry into its defects—as if it would not do to betray any signs of weakness within—as if it were not safe to displace the stones of the wall, to see whether the cement be strong and secure, while the darts of the enemy are flying thickly around us.

A contrast like this may occur to some of my readers in the spirit of two Monthly Magazines that come to us from abroad: the one of them, as is very natural, (in circumstances of recent change of opinion, and of extreme hardship in the treatment which it suffers—) much employed in settling its own opinions, or in attacking the opinions of others; much employed in spec-

ulation, and less about what is practical; and withal indulging a considerable share of self-complacency, to which I will not say how well it is entitled: and the other, acting well the part of a Christian Observer,—fearlessly examining into the spiritual deficiencies and faults of the church, lamenting the decays of piety, and urging repentance and reform,—and showing, on the whole, a spirit, which if there is enough of that 'salt of the earth,'—may preserve even the establishment.

It may be thought that in speaking thus, I am forgetting the cause. But I care not for the cause; I say it without fear or hesitation; I care not for Unitarianism, nor any other cause, any farther than it promotes a spirit of deep, rational, and fervent piety. Let it come to what its enemies predict,—let it be scattered to all the winds of heaven, and be without a record or a name, if it will not promote the sacred power of religion among us. If it is unfriendly to an exalted piety, let it be burned with 'the wood, and hay, and stubble;' and God grant that its honest advocates may be saved! though it be 'so as by fire.'

I have not, indeed, one doubt of the truth of its great and leading principles, and as little, that they will be embraced, like the *early* instructions, and as the *true* instructions of Jesus, as fast as men are able to receive them; and on both accounts, because they are true, and because they must prevail, I am the more anxious, that they should not be made a stumbling-block to those who as yet are too weak to receive them. It is a very high responsibility committed to our hands, to hold, if we do hold, the purest system of faith in the world, and it deserves to be seriously enquired, if there is no danger of betraying it. If we think there is none, this only shows, that the danger is so much the greater as we the less suspect it. And this, again, is the exposure of which I was speaking. We hear perpetual warnings of our danger, and we are, in consequence, too apt, it may be, to maintain that we are safe. To give an instance or two of this exposure: We are accused of making too little of our Saviour, and we forget, perhaps, in our eagerness to defend ourselves, that we *are* in common with all men, in danger of thinking too little of him. There is in every good mind, in every christian breast, a warm veneration and attachment to Jesus Christ; there is a sympathy with him, in his holy plans and purposes, in his compassion to the sinful, in his forgiveness and generous sacrifices, in his bitter sufferings; there is a tender and sacred admiration for his person and character. And all this feeling springs up spontaneously with the piety of christians and must grow with the growth of all their virtues. And it is

liable, on the contrary, to be checked, and chilled, by the selfish and unholy passions. Here, then, is a danger, of which we ought to be aware, and which in our circumstances we are liable to forget.

Again; we are accused of making too little of our sins. Now the circumstance of our being thus accused, may have brought about the very thing with which we are charged. We deny that this is the tendency of our principles, and forget, perhaps that it is, nevertheless, the tendency of our nature. We are employed with argument, when we need self examination. We are collecting proofs of the dignity of human nature, when we ought to be mourning that it is so fallen in ourselves.

3. In the third place, let me briefly observe, that we are in danger of taking, or rather of seeming to take the very character which is attributed to us.

If your friend accuses you of wanting feeling, sensibility, he takes the direct way to make you appear as if you wanted it; and your appearance will probably confirm him in his opinion. There is nothing that chills the heart, that seals the lips in silence, that freezes the warm breath of expression, that throws around you the cold atmosphere of reserve, like suspicion. An ingenuous and feeling mind disdains to vindicate itself from an unworthy charge.

And it may be so in religion. We are accused of being superficial, heartless, cold in religion, and though our heart burn within us at the charge, we will not open its secret and warm affections, lest it should seem to be making a display of them.

This remark principally relates, indeed, to the *manifestation* of piety, and to the impression it shall make on others; but there is danger also, to ourselves, that in repressing the proper expression of religious feeling, we shall in some measure repress the exercise of it.

It is hardly too much to say, that it requires the strength of a very great mind, to rise superior to such circumstances, to be itself, to express itself on proper occasions with ingenuous warmth and noble frankness: to sacrifice even its self-respect to its solicitude for others' good, and to the claims of a good cause.

4. Finally, the circumstance of this opposition exposes us to fly to the farthest extreme in religion from those who make it.

'Such is the nature of man'—it has been remarked by one who is thought to have been little enough inclined to moderation, I mean Dr. Priestley; 'such is the nature of man, that we are prone to run into extremes; so that having once called in question the principles of our ancestors, we are too apt to think them to have been absurd and wrong in every thing.'

And the remark might be applied with still greater force to our cotemporaries; for whatever is disliked in *them*, is continually before our eyes, and instead of a nominal *disapprobation* of our ancestors, we have an actual *opposition* which supplies an impulse to every step that removes us from them. That there is such a principle of repulsion in our nature will hardly be questioned. And the principle of association, too, comes in its aid, with mischievous force. Disliking some things in another, we are ready to see every thing in an unfavourable light. Dissatisfied with his character, his very habit and gait displease us.

This tendency to extremes, indeed, results from the *progress* of opinions, as well as from their collision, and so far, is to be considered under that head. We are now to offer a remark or two on the effect of *opposition* in this respect.

Now it would be quite plain in any ordinary case, that he who preferred against you what you thought to be severe and unjust charges, and, at the same time, confidently vaunted his own claims to superiority, would leave you in no very impartial state of mind, for estimating those claims. You would be peculiarly exposed to suspicion or aversion towards those very things. on which he most valued himself. This repugnance would be greatly increased, in matters of religion—whose loveliest virtue is humility, and whose peculiar dishonour is pride and the presumption of superior holiness. And your feelings of dislike would be apt to gain strength and confirmation, even, if you observed that those qualities and acts, on which the claim of superiority was founded, did not primarily and essentially belong to the nature of religion, but were adventitious and circumstantial; that though they were well enough in themselves, they were mixed up with many imperfections, and gave large scope to vanity and fanaticism.

Such I am compelled to believe, are some popular means of *promoting* the cause of religion:—I mean in particular, religious excitements, and the propagation of christianity by missions. The former have most extensively prevailed among the most ignorant, and among them particularly have been attended with but doubtful advantage. The latter, if they support the pretension to superior sanctity, will admit, as you know, the most corrupt church in christendom to the fairest claim.

But having said thus much, I have done with the language of objection against these ways of doing good. Why should we fear emotion, fervour, zeal in religion? in other words, why should we fear excitement? It is a part of our constitution. Why should it not be permitted to extend to religion as well as to other subjects? Shall a man be excited about every thing,

but his eternal well being? Is he alone beside himself, who is earnest, nay, anxious and fearful on such a subject?

Be it so, that such feelings shall be scrupulously guarded from error and from fanaticism. Be it admitted that they are hazardous among the ignorant and the weak; but among the well informed classes of society, among the higher circles of life in our cities and villages, among the crowds of fashion, the children of ease, the sons of pleasure, would to heaven, there were an excitement—yes, a RELIGIOUS excitement powerful enough to break the spell of sensual indulgence, of earthly ambition, of miserable stupidity! It surely is very unfortunate, that in the most populous and opulent portions of the country, in what is too often the very sphere of religious indifference, where the present world engrosses all, and anxiety about a future, so rarely finds admission,—that there, the main fear and feeling about religion, should be a dread or a scorn of excitement. I wish not to be misunderstood. By excitement I mean, now, something better than has often passed under that name. What are called awakenings, and revivals of religion, are frequently of such a character, and are so conducted, as neither to be approved nor desired.

I cannot now enter into this subject, which of itself would require a considerable essay. Let it suffice to observe, for the sake of discrimination, that where fear is the principal impulse, and mere sympathy spreads the contagion of terror or joy over the community—where a vulgar publicity is given to the most sacred feelings, or what ought to be the most sacred feelings of every individual—where men begin their religion by neglecting all the ordinary duties of life—where an extravagant, and, therefore, necessarily transient state of mind, is looked upon as the main and decisive test and arbiter of mens' character and prospects—and, above all, perhaps, where this very doubtful state of things is made a matter of sectarian boasting, is industriously reported as the lifting up of the standard of the Lord against the incursions of heresy, and thus God is made a party to all the imperfection and self conceit of human weakness and passion,—where these things are witnessed, we are compelled to feel that al this is very widely different from the calm, sober and reasonable temper that appeared in the instructions and deportment of our Saviour—very widely different from the humble, retiring and sacred spirit of his religion.

It is not intended in these remarks to characterize all the religious excitements that have taken place in this country. They have been modified, of course, by the character of the people and of the religious teachers, where they have occurred.

Nor is it denied that in the most exceptionable cases, some individuals have been benefited: that some, in such seasons, have really commenced a virtuous and pious life. But it is believed that a greater number have been injured. Still less would I be understood, in what has now been said, to bring an objection against *religious emotion*. Let it be as strong as any man can feel, and yet maintain the ascendency of a sound judgment. And I repeat, that it is much to be desired that a deeper seriousness, that a lively solicitude about our duty and accountableness, should spread over our religious societies—that a work of conscience and of spiritual reform should go through the land. To a man, with any elevated views of religion, of God, and of eternity, there is nothing half so deplorable, as the indifference on these subjects, that pervades the mass of the community.

But I hasten to say a word on the subject of missions. Under whatever erroneous views they may, in any particular instance, be prosecuted, there can be no mistake in the principle on which they are founded; they are the cause of humanity, of religion, of God. In early times God sanctioned them. When unperverted they breathe the very spirit of his religion; they are inspired by the very genius of christianity. Nor are they very often or greatly perverted. I cannot have one sympathy with him who brands them as being chiefly the measure of a party. I am persuaded, that he might better know the men whom he thus summarily condemns or ridicules. And as to the principles on which they are founded; why, let it be asked, should not the great cause of human welfare, among all the objects of human activity and exertion, engage not only some attention, but some direct efforts,—yea, and enterprises, too,—I had almost said, experiments. I must think, it is unfortunate, for any man that he should be inventing objections against such a cause as this—that he should be impelled by any circumstances to write and talk himself into an opposition or a coldness towards it; it is unfortunate fo his temper, for his benèvolence, for every generous virtue he would cherish. I wish it to be observed, that I speak not of any particular forms of missionary zeal or enterprize, but of the abstract cause of missions, of the spread of pure religion, of the advancement of the highest welfare and happiness of men. And to such an object, I know that every christian heart gives its best wishes.

Besides, the subject has an overwhelming magnitude in relation to our own country. It is a question of the greatest moment, what is to be the religion and the virtue of this new world. Purer they must be than has ever yet been witnessed on earth, or our free institutions must follow the fate of every former exam-

ple. And what is the prospect of a people, devoted to gain, and already far scattered upon the mountains as sheep without a shepherd ?

In no respect are other nations an example for us in regard to our duties. They have grown up to their immense population slowly, and their religious institutions have slowly grown with them. But here is a nation born in a day. It is yet in its youth. It needs education. It needs culture. It needs extraordinary means, proportioned to its extraordinary situation. It needs extraordinary services from us;—the active and zealous dissemination of truth, of knowledge and virtue. It needs the labours of christian instruction, in season, and out of season,—in the house and by the way—in the city and the wilderness—in the vallies which it is crowding with its children, and in all the high places of its habitation.

In fine, it would be a matter of deep regret, if the sentiments, with which we are unfortunately regarded as a class of christians, should lessen in us one feeling of piety, or drive us from one field of usefulness; if they should cause us to forget that we are christians, and that those whom we regret to call opposers, are still brethren. Let us rather endeavour not only to bear, but to improve the trial. An exalted piety is worth any endurance; and the crown of martyrdom itself is not brighter, than the crown of meekness.

Above all, while we hope that we are correct, let us not forget that others are conscientious—nay, and kind too; and if any one among us is wont to indulge in disparaging reflections concerning them, let him know that there are those among them, who have as many generous and noble sentiments as he himself cherishes; and who are worthy of something better than his pity or contempt. Let him even suspect something more: let him consider whether the weaker side is not exposed to the worse temper, even though it maintains the better cause.

In a word, if we must sustain a conflict, though every affection we have is wounded by the thoughts of it—let it be the conflict of love; and let the spirit with which we regard it be the spirit of watchfulness and humility.

II. I turn now from the opposition, to the *progress* of our opinions, as a circumstance that exposes us to danger.

There is nothing perhaps which exhibits a wider contrast between the language that men use, and the feelings they yield to, between their pretensions and actual experience, than the subject of religious liberty. This liberty has been the theme of protestant christendom for three centuries. But, after all, what does it come to? What avails this boasted freedom, when there

are every where among us—not chains and dungeons—for amidst these, the mind might still be free; but when there are every where prejudices and passions and fears—the chains and fetters of the soul.

Physical bondage has indeed disappeared, but mental bondage is left behind it; the terrors of the inquisition have given place to terrors of a more spiritual kind. Man is not yet free. There is a keeper of the prison-house *within*, that is not yet dislodged. A keeper did I say? Nay, every unworthy affection and every grovelling desire, and every fear of man, more than of God, draws with added force the bonds of the mental servitude. There is not a more striking feature in the religion of our protestant communities, than a fear of inquiry—a horror of innovation. He, who does not know that this spell is on the faculties of men, knows nothing about them. If there were half as much fear of *doing* wrong, as there is of *thinking* wrong, it would be a most auspicious omen.

But from this bondage some have attempted to assert their freedom. How far they have attained it, is not to my present purpose to inquire. It may be allowed, perhaps, that their efforts have not been entirely without success, since they are accused of being free in their opinions even to presumption and licentiousness.

Now it would not be strange, if they who had cast off the shackles of human authority, who had learnt to look with calmness upon all the terrors that men could devise, or could display in admonitions or edicts or denunciations—who had felt the liberty of studying God's will, in the fear of God alone;—it would not be strange, if they should be transported too far in the exercise or in the estimate of this liberty. The bondage of superstitious fear is so ignoble and so odious, that a release from it might well be apprehended to be more than human infirmity could safely bear. Still less is it strange, that those who have looked upon these matters with a superficial eye—who have withdrawn their attention from worldly pursuits, only to catch here and there a more liberal principle, without connecting it with a system of truly liberal thinking—that such, I say, should be seriously injured by the progress of opinion around them.

To some of the dangers of this state of things, I wish now to draw your attention.

Progress of religious opinion, generally and abstractly considered, is what, as every one knows, the christian world has been experiencing for some centuries, and what no man in his individual case would be ashamed to allow. There could not be a more ignoble boast surely, than that of having passed from child

hood to maturity, without changing one notion of religion from that early, crude, imperfect form in which it first entered the mind. What now is this progress? I mean progress in general, and not of any particular, much less of any doctrinal kind: a progress which often takes place in the passage from childhood to maturity. I answer, that it will always be found to consist in modifying some opinions, and rejecting others, in simplifying and spiritualizing the objects of belief, in attributing more to the spirit, and less to the form of godliness. He who has made any such progress in religious views, who has made any progress worth mentioning, has more and more separated from real and essential piety things that are indifferent to it. He has gone through a process of retrenching; many weak and unworthy conceptions of piety have disappeared; many appendages of prejudice and superstition have fallen off, and every day, pure religion has risen before him brighter and lovelier and more majestic. To give some instances of this progress; he once thought that religion was a sacrifice and a penance, and now it is his privilege and joy; that prayer was irksome, and now it is his delight. He went to his closet with heavy and reluctant steps, and imagined that the Deity was best pleased with the sacrifice of grief: he now goes with joyful alacrity, and he knows that God, the infinitely good and blessed, invites him to worship with joyfulness and gladness of heart: that He, who is himself infinitely happy, is well pleased with the offering of happiness. He imagined that repentance was best testified by tears, but he now perceives that the most acceptable offering it can make, is a humble and cheerful resolution to forsake what is sinful, and to amend what is wrong. There is a similar change in his judgment of the outward expressions and adjuncts of piety. He no longer thinks that any peculiar aspect of the countenance, or any peculiar style of manners, is an essential part of it. He does not look upon the christian Sabbath as a day of irksome restraint on his manners and affections; but as a time, though by no means of levity, yet of cheerful freedom and rest, of religious, rational enjoyment. In short, he has come to perceive that it is not the business of religion to be unhappy; that it lends a charm to all innocent pleasure; that it sanctions reasonable and decent recreation, as much as it frowns on that which is vicious and unhallowed.

It is evident, that such, and more extensively, a similar progress may be made without any reference to doctrinal tenets; and in almost all classes of christians there are many liberal minded persons who have made this progress. Still, however, the spirit of those sects, the spirit of their views and instructions, is not af-

fected by this change in a few of their members, who do not wish to risk their influence, by developing the latitude of their opinions, or else do actually lose their influence by the disclosure, and pass with their brethren for very loose and worldly christians at the best. But the class of christians with which we are connected, is distinguished by having incorporated into their avowed system these more liberal and cheerful views of religious practice, and along with them, similar ideas of religious doctrine. These views are not kept in the sanctuary of a few minds, but are freely and fearlessly proclaimed; they are preached, talked about, published, and made prominent features of the system. They distinguish, and in a measure characterize, the denomination of christians who embrace this system.

Now there is a class of minds, which, as it seems to me, this state of things exposes to great injury. Indeed it is to be considered, that there are two distinct classes of advocates for the system in question; those who are such from anxious inquiry and from solemn conviction, and those who are such, or pass for such, from easy inclination, from careless preference for a system that is more cheerful, and with respect to certain indifferent matters of faith and practice, more indulgent. It is of these last that I speak, as being peculiarly exposed to danger. In other words, I speak of nominal Unitarians, a class, which, if it is any dishonour to possess, it is a dishonour which we share in common with all other denominations of christians.

There are many such who are indifferent to all religion, who are not under the strong and swaying influence even of any prejudices concerning it, and whose common sense is therefore left to operate more freely, and perhaps more justly; who dread all superstitious fears, and rightly; who abhor all creeds and systems, and all human authority, and all dominion of fear over mens' consciences, and do so perhaps even too much. However this may be, it is certain that all this will not necessarily make them christians; and yet that it may make them, in their speculative views, so far as they have any, *Unitarians*. Just as an opposite cast of mind, a submission to fear and prejudice and authority, may fail to make men christians, and yet may make them orthodox; in other words, may make them of the popular, the prevailing faith. There are also people of the world who dislike restraint, who dislike seriousness, who cannot bear singularity and strictness in religion, nor do they like plain and close dealing from their religious instructors, and who are, therefore, naturally attracted to a system of doctrine, and mode of teaching, that appears more cheerful and liberal. They prefer to hear those preachers, that do not (because they think the evil of the matter is more in the

abuse than in the practice)—that do not so much inveigh against their favourite amusements. They are apt to feel that this is a good sort of religion for them. Still more, if this is the fashionable religion, they find an additional inducement for attaching themselves to it. It is to be observed, by the by, that it is not always the fashionable religion; and it will be found that every system and sect, has in its turn, according to its circumstances, the homage of the gay and the worldly. And this only shows, in a still more striking manner, the hurtful levity of that class of persons, to whom the general course of our remarks apply. They have not thought enough to be prepared for a more liberal system. They are dazzled and led astray by the very light that is around them.

There is some hazard, even to a *thinking* and *serious* mind, in giving up its early prejudices; but for one carelessly to throw away his prejudices, and take no principles in their stead, to catch just enough of a more liberal system to render him more easy in sin, and more stupid in conscience and a sense of duty, to be growing worse under a system of improvement; what can possibly be more dangerous! There is a system of truth, pure, spiritual, and ennobling, that is kindly and encouraging to every generous and holy feeling, that is fitted to elevate, to sanctify, and gladden the soul; and all that *they* know about it is, that it is not severe nor strenuous concerning trifles, nor strict about things indifferent, that it does not require any austerity nor eccentricity of manners, that it is fair and inviting in its outward appearance. Its inward beauty they have never perceived; its glorious power they have never felt. They have caught a gleam of light from it; but even the light that is in them, is darkness; and how great is that darkness! They are all the worse, it may be, for what they know. They condemn others, and this keeps them from thinking humbly of themselves. They condemn others, and it may be that they do so justly; but the evil is, that they take credit to themselves for all the fault they can find with others. They talk violently against all superstitious terrors, and foolish singularities and sanctimonious austerity—against all spiritual pride (but their own,) and all hypocrisy and intolerance; and seem to think they have done their part in religion. What is still worse, it is much to be feared, that they have confounded with these faults, all serious, self-denying, and watchful piety, or else they are too much dazzled by their own discoveries to perceive that these old fashioned qualities are indeed and in truth a most essential part of religion. Wiser men think it sufficient to strip off some of the human appendages and additions which have disfigured the religion of past times, but with *their* superfi-

cial views, they make no distinction between the good and the bad, the fair and the deformed, and are ready to raze the whole superstructure to its foundation.

It will be asked, now, if a preference of the kind just described, for any given system of religion, is not a decisive argument against that system. In fact, it is often brought against the system which we embrace, as an unanswerable objection. It is said, that the worldly and fashionable men that are indifferent to religion, are readiest to receive it; and on the contrary, that persons the most serious and earnest in religion, feel towards it a strong repugnance. But what, let it be asked, has made them thus serious and earnest? What but a set of ideas which have taken so deep a hold on their minds, as to preclude all others; which have become so greatly endeared to them, so interesting and affecting, as of course to render them averse to progress or innovation of any kind. While those who have been less impressed with those ideas, and therefore less religious, are more accessible to new views and convictions.

But to come to the question in hand. Admit now that the preference of these last for the system, for the progress of thought in question, is a decisive objection against it, and consider what will follow. Not to urge any other reply, the simple inference from the principle which the objection assumes, is enough to set it aside. The principle is, that what the wordly, the indifferent in religion, (bad men, says the objection), what such prefer and admire, must necessarily be wrong. Apply this principle to common life, and it will follow that those, whom the worldly or the bad most venerate and admire, are the vicious and the unworthy. But who does not see the falsity of such a principle as this? Who does not know that this bad world, with all its bad propensities, has yet given the homage of its reverence, its gratitude, its enthusiasm, and of all its stronger and deeper sentiments, not to impiety and vice, but to worth and virtue? When did ever the character of our Saviour fail to attract the universal respect of the world? But according to the objection we are considering, this general regard would be a fatal impeachment of his greatness and purity.

Again, apply this objection to systems of opinion, to which indeed it particularly relates. We have considered in a former part of our remarks, the natural progress of thought from childhood to the maturity of reflection. Now it is certain that every mind would prefer the latter state. But if, perchance, men without religion do so, this must prove, according to the objection, that it is the worse state—that the enlightened and liberal views of mature reflection are worse than the superstitions and

crudities of childhood. Nay, this objection would stand against christianity itself, for christianity was a more liberal and inviting system than Judaism, which is represented as a yoke that men were unable to bear.

It would stand against protestantism, which imposes fewer austerities than popery. It would stand against every enlightened sect of christians, in the comparison with those which are more extravagant and fanatical; for the former require fewer singularities and outward self-denials.

Let it be admitted, and it is undoubtedly true, that the best system, the system which comes nearest to true christianity, is the one which is the most spiritually strict and pure, which involves the greatest inward self-denial, the most rigid sacrifice of all unholy passion, of all unkindness and malignity, and selfishness, which, in fine, extends most, and most scrupulously to the thoughts and intents of the heart in all the departments of duty and conscience. All this is undoubtedly true, and all this is precisely what I believe concerning the system in question. That others do not think so, that the careless and worldly do not think so, is the very evil complained of, the very danger which is feared.

I have ventured thus to speak of one class of persons, whom, it is apprehended, the progress of opinion exposes to danger; and if it has been with plainness, I trust that the case and the motive will plead my apology.

But the state of things, in which we are placed, does not exempt the most serious and conscientious from exposure. Some dangers, therefore, of general concern will now be very briefly noticed.

There is danger, then, in the progress of thought, of becoming less serious and fervent in religion. It assists the weakness of our nature to lean on forms and mystical doctrines, on the common consent of opinion, on venerable antiquity. Probably some of the devoutest and most earnest worshippers and believers in the world have been the most mistaken and extravagant. It is one of the excellencies of our system, and yet one of the circumstances of exposure, that it is more simple than others, that it furnishes less food for superstition and imagination, that it deals more in motives which are mild and encouraging, that it shows a greater mistrust of passion and excitement.

Besides, there is danger in mere speculation. It has a tendency to chill the heart. Even when it travels in the paths of received opinion, it has this tendency; much more, when it turns aside from them. Speculation is then too apt to grow into a passion for censure, which is unfriendly to the warm and gen-

erous affections. It may even come to be a habit of contempt, which is worse still. There is danger, lest in despising intemperate zeal, we should become lukewarm. There is danger in ridiculing extravagant excitement, that we may become careless.

In the next place, we are liable in our circumstances to go too far in religion. This remark, it may be added in passing, is not more applicable to speculation, nor even so much, as to our practical views of piety.

Opinions in their progress gain an impulse that is liable, from the very nature of the case, to carry them too far. This is a danger, that results from the very imperfection of our minds. We may not know the exact bounds that separate liberty from licentiousness, belief from scepticism; and we may incautiously overstep these bounds. And we are impelled to do so by the eagerness of research, by the pride of discovery, by the natural reaction of opinions in our own minds, by the weakness of the arguments that are brought against us, and by many other causes.

Nor is the only danger which results immediately from the progress of opinion, that of going too far; another is, that we are liable to go *too fast*. Not that we are liable to make too rapid a progress in pure truth, but that we may take up principles in too quick a succession, and sketch out their results too hastily, and thus embrace much error. Truths that are new to the mind, need to be slowly digested; and every progress of opinion that is rapid, is, for that very reason, hazardous. The mind is not apt to be content with its acquisitions, but is ever making excursions into the regions of discovery. It pauses not long to contemplate what *is* true, but quickly passes to consider what *may* be true. And if it does not well and cautiously arrange and digest what it has acquired, it is prone to make inferences that are rash and alarming. It is thus that some minds, on the threshold of a better system, have started back from terrific but fancied consequences, from long but imaginary vistas of speculation, from cold but visionary regions of scepticism. Their speculations have outstripped their judgment; and breathless and amazed with their hasty progress, they have turned back their steps from the threshold, have refused to examine the region before them, and proved nothing, in fine, but the infirmity of their own minds.

Finally, there is danger in the progress of thought of becoming unreasonably sceptical.

There is a feeling of insecurity necessarily attending the relinquishment of old opinions. It is not an easy thing to think much, and freely, without any bondage of fear, and yet to have the mind perfectly and substantially settled.

You will ask, perhaps, how the mind *can* be settled, when it is in a state of progress, and sometimes of doubt? I answer that we may be substantially settled on what is substantially and unquestionably true and important. And we may thus, and we have reason to be entirely easy and happy, in the utmost freedom of inquiry.

The character of God, the office of our Saviour, the rules and the rewards of holy living, these things are certain. And it is not necessary to be disturbed and shaken, if we *are* in some doubt about the mode of God's existence, about the metaphysical nature of Jesus Christ, about the particular circumstances that are to attend our future state. Something it becomes our nature, our condition, our faith to receive *on trust*.

Now we are exposed to a needless feeling of insecurity and of hesitation, because we do not sufficiently distinguish between these two departments of opinion, the certain and the doubtful, the essential and the comparatively indifferent. We may rest with calm reliance on the great pillars of christianity, and as calmly permit ourselves to be uncertain about the intermediate spaces, and the surrounding scenery, and the exact features of the distant prospect. There is no need of doubting every thing, because we doubt some things. Nay, the very uncertainty about some points of speculation might well induce us to cling with more assurance and satisfaction to the firm pillars of our faith and hope.

The system of inquiry which we embrace, leads also to a set of opinions concerning the Bible, that are liable to produce a feeling of diffidence, not about its authority, but about its meaning. We are accustomed to think that its import has been greatly misunderstood. We enter it therefore to apply the rules of a rigid interpretation to it, and a part of the systematic and sure theology we had found in it vanishes away. When, also, the inquirer finds that not a few passages have a local and limited meaning, instead of that reference to spiritual religion, which he, in concurrence with common opinion, had attributed to them, he is apt to feel as if something of the charm was gone. And gone it surely is; and yet truth has come in its stead; and a juster way of thinking may well compensate for some gratification of the fancy or of the feelings.

These causes of diffidence and anxiety about our faith, are increased in some minds, by the weak notion, that there is more merit in believing too much than in believing too little. They, who lean on an ancient and prevalent faith, say to the more liberal inquirer, 'we believe as much as you do and more too; we are therefore at least as safe as you are, and perhaps more so; we have all the interest in the divine favour, *from believing*,

that you have, and withal something of superrogation,' as if the safety of any were in proportion to the amount of their belief, to the length of their creed—as if merit were to be measured by credulity—as if the favour of God was to be secured by paying homage to the judgment of men, or reverence for him to be expressed by the fear of inquiring into his own will. If an easy confidence, a quiet assurance of being right, were the test of truth, it were better at once to go back to the bondage of other days; it were better to join ourselves at once to the company of the most ignorant and the most bigotted.

On the whole, I trust that the remarks which have now been offered, will show that our faults as a class of christians, are owing, not to our principles, but to our circumstances. It ought to be remembered, by *us* for our caution, and by *others* for their charity, that these circumstances are a very severe trial of the character.

The moral dealings of God with the world, and the conduct of his commissioned messengers, have always recognized the danger attending this trial. Light has been opened upon the world as man was able to bear it. Witness the successive dispensations, which have been appointed for his instruction. It may well be doubted whether the mind of Abraham, with all his piety, could have borne at once the full light of christianity, true and pure as it is. And when at last it actually appeared and rose slowly upon the world, you know that it cost the most conscientious and pious Jews a severe trial to receive it. And had it not been supported by miracles, how would they have exclaimed against it, in terms like those which we hear at the present day; how would they have exclaimed against it, as *rash, licentious, and impious!* And yet christianity was the truth; and no more the truth for being established by miracles, though it was the more manifested to be such.

It is on this principle of which we are speaking—viz. that the progress of opinion is a hazardous trial of the character—that our Saviour adapted his instructions to his disciples. 'I have yet many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now.' It was not enough that any thing was true, for him to determine that it would be useful. There was needed a preparation of mind for it. Thus too the apostles treated their converts. And I know not but it was on the same principle, that the church was allowed to degenerate, to fall from its simplicity and purity, into gross superstitions and a splendid ceremonial, to meet the wants of crude and uncultivated minds; to stay the deluge of ignorance and barbarism, to preserve christianity itself from destruction. The Goth and Vandal would not have bowed before

the authority of simple and spiritual principles. What knew they of principles? They wanted something in a more tangible form. It was needful, that they should have lordly Pontiffs and Bishops, and august rites, and the strong restraints of superstitious terror. Different minds, in short, need different religions; and it is a consolatory reflection, that most minds are as liberal as they can bear to be; it is unfortunate that some are more so. But surely the imperfection of man does not invalidate the truth of God. Surely the abuse of a system is no good reason for rejecting it. Indeed what system under heaven has not been abused? And what candid and observing christian, of whatever sect, does not see, and admit, and deplore some abuses of his system? The advocate of christianity itself can do no less.

Let it be repeated, that the progress of opinion is a severe trial of the character. It is very credible that it has done injury to some minds. And it is no argument against it, to admit that it has. There may be martyrs to the progress of truth as there were to its early struggles.

Who does not see at this moment, all over Europe, in the progress of political principles, a striking illustration of what I am saying. We believe that the cause of political reform is a good cause, but we believe that it is carrying many too far. We see ebullitions, and extravagances and extremes, and signs of speculative licentiousness, which we do not approve; but still we do, and none the less, approve the main cause. Why should we suppose that there is any less danger attending the progress of religious principles? Or why should we, any more, argue against these principles, from their perversion? Excesses in religious liberty are surely quite as much to be expected, and actually have been as great, as excesses in civil liberty.

Let us, then, christian brethren, be on our guard. The great trial is now passing—and it is passing before the face of the world, and in the sight of heaven;—to see whether man can be liberal and good; free in inquiry, and yet strict in conscience; unprejudiced, and yet under the influence of salutary restraint; whether he can be indulgent in charity, and yet severe in principle; rational without cold abstraction, and cheerful without hurtful levity; wiser than the men of former days, and at the same time, more humble; to see, whether religion, that has so long lived in the fears of men, can live in their love and veneration; —whether religion that has so long dwelt in rites and forms, can dwell at last in the spirit; whether, in fine, religion, that in former times has gone away to caves and hermitages to make its abode, or has scarcely departed from the temple of its worship, can come, at last, and dwell in the midst of society.

I repeat it; the trial is passing before the face of the world, in the sight of heaven. There have been instances, in which I am compelled to believe the result of the experiment has been, at least, of a doubtful character. What it shall be on the shores of this new world, this new theatre of human improvement, is given to *us*, in solemn charge, to determine. If society is enough advanced to bear the experiment, it shall come to a glorious completion: if not, then the weakness and wickedness of man, must, till other centuries, restrain the liberty of the soul, and the light of heaven.

TRANSLATION OF WETSTEIN'S NOTE UPON MAT. IV. 24.

The controversy concerning dæmons may be reduced to two questions; of which one relates to Medicine, the other to Grammar. The first is, What persons received the appellation of demoniacs or lunatics? the latter, What were the grounds and reasons of this appellation?

By demoniacs and lunatics are intended, in my opinion, *persons labouring under some bodily disease or incapacity*. It is, I am sensible, the opinion of some writers, that these persons were under the direct and immediate agency of the *devil*, who, by *possessing* this or that part of the body, hindered its proper functions, whilst the part thus incapacitated remained sound and uninjured; that it was the mere power of satan, that prevented a man's seeing, or hearing, or speaking; the organs of these faculties being free from disease or defect. This opinion I reject for the following reasons.

I. Demoniacs are *expressly called* blind, deaf, and dumb, in Mat. xii. 22. Mark ix. 25. Luke xi. 14: nor can any good reason be assigned, why we should not regard them as really blind, deaf, or dumb; i. e. persons, whose organs of sight, speech, or hearing were diseased or imperfect. So too in the description of other demoniacs in Mat. viii. 17. and the parallel passages, no one can fail to remark the manifest symptoms of insanity or of epilepsy.

II. In Mat. xv. 28. xvii. 16. Luke ix. 42. viii. 2. demoniacs are said to have been *healed* by Jesus; an expression which implies that the persons, thus healed or cured, were previously afflicted with some *real disease*. In Mark v. 15. Luke viii. 35. a demoniac, after his cure, is said to have a *sound mind;* from which it is correctly inferred that he had been previously afflicted with *insanity*, which is a disease.

III. Demoniacs are mentioned in connexion with diseased per-

sons, and ranked in the same class with them in the passages already referred to, and in Luke xiii. 32. John x. 20, 21. Mat. viii. 16. x. 1. 8. Mark i. 34. iii. 15. vi. 13. xvi. 17, 18. Luke iv. 40, 41. ix. 1. vii. 21. viii. 2. Acts viii. 7.

IV. In Mat. xi. 5. Luke vii. 22. where several classes of the sick, whom Jesus restored to health, are enumerated, there is no mention of demoniacs; and it is highly improbable that these would have been omitted, if they had been supposed to constitute a distinct class of persons from any which had been mentioned.

V. Josephus, and the books of the physician Gittin. f. 672. inform us that medicines composed of roots, herbs and stones, were administered to demoniacs with success. Now we all know that medicines are frequently effectual in curing a real disorder of the body; but how they can act upon spirit is not so easily comprehended.

VI. The opinion, we are opposing, tends to exalt the power of the devil, and to lower that of Christ. For to make a man, who is really not blind, appear to others to be so, is an act requiring greater power than actually to make him blind. On the other hand to cure real blindness or deafness is more difficult than to cure that which is only *believed* to be blindness or deafness.

VII. The opinion, that demoniacs were persons labouring under some natural disease, is confirmed by the following quotations from writers of that and the succeeding age. Bechoroth vii. 5. 'An epileptic person, upon whom a spirit of melancholy fell.' Vide 1. Sam. 16. 14—23, and the commentators. Tobit iii. 8. v. 17. viii. 3. Jos. Ant. vi. 8. 2. 'Certain passions and dæmons came upon Saul, causing suffocation and strangling. No remedy could be discovered by the physicians but this; that if any person could be found, who was able to charm by singing, and to play upon the harp, such a person should be procured, and be ordered to observe when the dæmons came upon Saul and disturbed him, and to stand over him, and play on the harp and recite hymns. Saul was highly pleased with him when he was come; for he charmed his passion, and was the only physician against the vexation caused by the dæmons when they came upon him; by reciting hymns, and playing upon the harp, and bringing him to his right mind.' Polyb. Exc. xxxi. de Antiocho, 'He died in consequence of having a dæmon, as some say.' Undoubtedly his death was caused by disease and not by possession. Plut. Thes. p. 6. C. 'When Minos was bringing great calamities upon men by war, and a dæmon was destroying the country, (for a great dearth and pestilence prevailed, and the rivers were dried up) the God intimated that when they had ap-

peased Minos, there should be a respite from their calamities.' Jos. Ant. vi. 11. 2. 'When an evil spirit and dæmons came upon thee, he (David) cast them out, and gave *peace* to thy soul.' viii. 2. 5. Concerning Solomon. 'God enabled him to learn the useful and salutary art of expelling dæmons. He composed incantations, by which disorders are alleviated. He also bequeathed to posterity forms of exorcisms by which dæmons may be driven away, so as never to return. This method of cure has great efficacy even to the present day. For I have seen one of my countrymen, whose name was Eleazar, releasing persons possessed by dæmons, in the presence of Vespasian, and his sons and captains, and the whole multitude of his soldiers. The manner of performing the operation was this. He applied a ring, having under the seal, one of the roots mentioned by Solomon, to the nostrils of the demoniac, and then drew out the dæmon through the nostrils; and, when the man fell down suddenly, he adjured the dæmon to return no more, still making mention of Solomon, and reciting the incantations which he composed. And when Eleazar would demonstrate to the spectators that he had this power, he placed at a short distance a basin full of water, and ordered the dæmon to overturn it, as he went out of the man, and thus let the spectators know that he had left him. After this the wisdom and skill of Solomon were manifest. De bello Jud. vii. 6. 3. Concerning Machaerus. 'In the valley enclosing the city on the north side, there is a certain place called Baaras, which produces a root of the same name with itself. It is valuable for this single property, that if it be only brought to the *sick*, it expels immediately what are called dæmons; which are the spirits of the wicked, that enter into living men, and kill them, unless they obtain help.' Tertullian Apol. 22. 'They bring *sickness*, and other grievous evils upon mankind.' Augustin de Gen. ad lit. xii. 17. 'Perhaps the man was really *insane*; but on that account he was supposed to be possessed by a dæmon.'

VIII. If the blindness of the demoniac had been owing to some external obstacle, placed before the eye by the dæmon, the sight might have been restored at pleasure by the dæmon, by removing the external cause of blindness. But to do this was beyond his power. John x. 31. 'Can a dæmon open the eyes of the blind?'

From the preceding considerations Wetstein concludes, that by demoniacs and lunatics are intended *persons afflicted with some real natural disease.*

The second enquiry is; For what reasons are persons afflicted with certain diseases, called demoniacs, or lunatics?

Respecting lunatics little need be said, because it is generally

admitted by the learned, that the appellation was derived from the popular opinion respecting the origin of the disorder. Chemnitius in loc. 'It seems convenient to distinguish the words, demoniacs and lunatics, by supposing the former to mean persons who are distressed in consequence of the possession of satan; and the latter, persons, whose insanity is owing not to diabolical possession, but to an agitation of the humours of the brain, which are supposed to be affected by the moon.'

But it is maintained by many writers, that the demoniacs are so called, because the devil was either the immediate or the remote cause of the disorder, with which they were afflicted. The opinion of those, who contend that the devil was the remote cause of the disorder, is thus stated by Gerard. 'Human nature was not so constituted by God at the beginning, as that men could become blind, deaf, or dumb; but, according to the just judgment of God, these disorders were introduced into human nature by the devil, on account of the sin of man: and the evangelists use this phraseology to denote that these disorders were the work of satan.' But, even admitting that disease and death are incident to men in consequence of the sin of Adam, and the deception of satan, in this account of the matter no reason is assigned, why certain particular diseases should be referred to the devil, rather than all others.

It is, therefore, maintained by other writers, that the devil was the *immediate cause* of the diseases of the demoniacs; that he sent one or more evil angels, who usurping, as it were, the seat of the soul, commanded or restrained at pleasure the motions of the tongue, hands or feet, which are usually voluntary, and also excited unusual motions by convulsion of the nerves. But this opinion is pressed with many insuperable difficulties.

I. It never has been, nor can it be, proved. The scriptures make mention of *dæmons* as a multitude, but in the history of the demoniacs, no mention is made of the *single individual*, the *devil*. Nor is it any where said, that the devil had the bodies of demoniacs in his power; or that he *possessed* them to use the modern term. It has indeed been contended, that the devil could not be said to be ejected or expelled, unless he had first possessed or inhabited their human body. There is, however, no small inconsistency in relying upon this argument, and at the same time rejecting with indignation, the supposition, that Judas, the traitor, into whom satan is said to have entered, was possessed with the devil. v. Calvin upon John xvi 27. The notion that the devil entered Judas essentially, as they say, is too foolish and trifling to merit consideration. Equally trifling is the question, whether the devil entered Judas *substantially*, in Luke xxii. 3.

II. I have said that the agency of the devil upon the persons of the demoniacs has not been, and could not be proved. From what could the proof arise? From the confession of the demoniacs, Mat. viii. But this very circumstance is mentioned by physicians as one of the symptoms of insanity. P. Aegineta iii. 14. Concerning melancholy and madness. 'Some insane persons imagine they are under the *influence of higher powers*, and predict future events, as if they were inspired.' Sextus Empiricus. 'Phrenetic and fanatical persons think they hear dæmons, but we do not.' At any rate, the testimony of a person, not in his right mind, ought to have no great credit attached to it. Could then an attentive spectator infer the agency of the devil from the *symptoms and other circumstances of the case?* Certainly not: since the same effects may be produced by very different causes. A man, for instance, may become blind in consequence of intemperance, or of a wound, or of exposure to bad air: and he may be deprived of sight by the Supreme Being, or by an evil spirit. Now a person deprived of sight by the agency of satan, is neither more nor less blind, and his blindness can be cured with neither greater nor less difficulty than that, which proceeds from natural causes. How then could the most inquisitive spectator investigate the real but secret cause of the disorder, so as to distinguish, with certainty, blindness caused by satan from that which proceeds from other causes. If we should see such men as the demoniacs at the present day, we should call them simply blind, deaf, dumb, epileptic, or insane, without thinking of satan as having any agency in regard to these disorders.

Did, then, our Saviour descend from heaven for the purpose of revealing this secret to mankind? It certainly was a secret of no great importance, since a knowledge of it would neither contribute to the present happiness, nor the eternal salvation of men. From what source, then, can the proof arise, if not from the confession of the demoniacs, from the circumstances of the case, nor from direct revelation? But if any one rashly adopt the opinion of diabolical agency without proof, with what colour of justice can he condemn a thief or murderer, who should allege in his defence, that the deed was committed without his own knowledge or consent; that the devil by art and cunning, got possession of his body, and made use of his limbs against his will. In consequence, the greatest confusion must be produced in society; and the certainty of testimony, and the evidence of the senses must be set aside.

III. It may reasonably be asked of such as refer these disorders to diabolical agency, how it happened, that, at the time of

the appearance of our Saviour in the world, the devil should possess a power over the bodies of men, which he does not possess at the present day, nor can be shewn by respectable testimony to have exercised since that time? Will any one seriously and considerately reply, that God permitted satan to exercise such a power, in order that our Saviour might have more ample opportunities and occasions of displaying his powers of healing? Quacks and jugglers, we know, sometimes drink poison, or wound themselves, in order to shew by experiment the efficacy of their medicines. But they would not easily prevail upon others to take the poison, or wound themselves, for the mere purpose of being cured. Most men would like to be excused both from the evil and the remedy. No wise and good physician would be guilty of such a practice.

IV. The notion of an evil spirit, an emissary from the community of evil spirits, usurping the seat of the soul in the human body, and performing its functions, is so abhorrent to reason and probability, that its defenders only expose themselves to ridicule, and the religion of Christ to suspicion and contempt. Beza, I think, had this thought in his mind, when he remarks upon Luke viii. 31. 'We must judge soberly of these things, according to the divine word; lest for the truth of God we substitute old wives fables.' See Lucian. Philopseud. 16. The ancients, indeed, who, according to the doctrine of metempsychosis, believed that one soul might animate two bodies in succession, supposed that dæmons were human souls. We have already quoted a passage from Josephus, proving this point. Justin Martyr likewise entertained the same opinion. v. Apol. ii. 'Men, who are possessed and agitated by the souls of dead men, whom they commonly call demoniacs and insane.' A much more incredible doctrine is held by some modern writers, now that the doctrine of transmigration of souls is exploded, viz. that evil spirits may be so intimately united with the human body, as to command at pleasure the tongue, the hands, &c. like the human soul.

V. Those writers, who ascribe these things to the immediate agency of the devil, and the evil angels his ministers, entertain an exalted notion of his power, but seem to have a poor opinion of his cunning and policy. The limbs of the demoniacs were convulsed: their language was wild and incoherent; such as that of madmen is wont to be. But what secret fraud, what artful contrivance appears in all this? What could be more foolish, than that satan should place one of his subjects as a perpetual guard over a man, for the mere purpose of keeping his eyes shut? Or what could be more impolitic than to commit one man to the

care of a whole legion of his soldiers, and thus bind them and the man with the same chain? Would not a single individual be sufficient for a guard? Or might he not, in an instant, have inflicted such an injury on the brain, or the eye, as would cause the disorder and all the symptoms of the disorder, without the constant presence of an evil spirit? Might not his servants be employed with advantage upon other business—in extending or defending the borders of his kingdom? Why then are so many of them employed to keep guard over one poor man,

——'ceu cætera nusquam
Bella forent, nulli tota morerentur in urbe?'

VI. It is a consideration of great importance in relation to this subject, that physicians with great unanimity, and almost with one voice, not only consider demoniacs as diseased, and prescribe remedies for them, but expressly maintain the opinion, that the disease was not inflicted by a spirit, or dæmon, and that the name was borrowed not from the reality of the thing, but from the popular opinion respecting the origin of the disorder. Hippocrates, the prince of physicians, has discoursed at large on the subject, in his treatise περὶ ἱερῆς νοσου. [The authorities which Wetstein has quoted under this head, are too numerous to be inserted. They abundantly prove his assertion, that the physicians *with one voice* considered the cases of demoniacs as natural diseases.] Origen in a note upon Mat. xvii. 15, acknowledges that the physicians differ from him in opinion. Psellus also, 'de operat. dæm.' observes, 'The sons of the physicians would persuade us to think that these disorders are not caused by dæmons.' We shall take the liberty of dissenting from Origen, who was a Platonick philosopher, and form our opinion concerning the nature and cause of the disorder from the testimony of the physicians. We shall also believe and maintain, that St. Luke, who was a physician, Col. iv. 14, agreed *in opinion* with his professional brethren, though he adopted the popular language of the times. As St. John 1 epistle iv. 1. gives the appellation of spirits to persons not inspired, but who were only supposed to be. so St. Luke speaks of dæmons in accommodation to the popular belief and language.

VII. In the last place, the *most learned of the Jews* and Christians in ancient times, have every where spoken of demoniacs in a manner which shews that they acknowledged no agency of the devil upon them. In modern times, they express themselves with more reserve and caution, through fear of offending the prejudices of the powerful. Bava Mehia f. 107. 2. 'Thirteen things are said concerning morning breakfast. It is a remedy against cold, heat, accidents, and *dæmons*, &c.' Maimonides in Sabbat.

'All the kinds of diseases, which are called *melancholy*, they call an evil spirit. For there is a species of the diseases above described, which causes the subject of it to avoid society, and to be alienated, as it were, from human nature, when he sees the light, or when he falls into the company of men. On the other hand, during the paroxysms of the disorder, they delight in darkness and solitude; and this disorder is frequent in illustrious men. Erubin. iii. 4. 'They call every injury which does not proceed from the hand of man, an *evil spirit*.'

[Numerous quotations from Jewish writers may be found in Wetstein, which it is unnecessary to insert.]

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

DR. OSGOOD.

[We are gratified with the permission to extract the following passages from an interesting manuscript of the late venerable Dr. Osgood. They strongly mark his sense of the presumption and inconsistency of all encroachments of human authority in matters of faith and of the entire sufficiency of the scriptures. They exhibit also the devotional spirit, which eminently distinguished him. Those, who knew him, knew his attachment to religious liberty, and with what grief and indignation he regarded every attempt to restrain it. It will be remembered, that his professional intercourse corresponded with these enlarged and catholic views. He maintained to the fullest extent the independent rights of churches and private christians; and while attached to some of the opinions, which are usually denominated orthodox, he never thought himself required to refuse interchanges with those of his brethren, who differed from him. His sentiments and example in this respect are entitled to our highest veneration; and we wish they may be followed for the order and harmony of our churches.]

'With regard to theological creeds, whether Presbyterian or Episcopalian, though I embrace their principal doctrines, yet my mind is always in a state of insurgency against their imposition;—*against all subscription to articles of faith enjoined by human authority.* To me they appear as the primary habiliments of the Roman harlot, among her first acts of wantonness. The inspired teachers of the gospel were qualified, and of course authorized, to prescribe. But I feel indignant at seeing men without any pretensions to inspiration, assuming and exercising its powers and pre-

rogatives. The whole mass of church-establishments, hierarchies, canons, creeds, confessions, &c. &c.—are, in my view, human inventions, wood, hay and stubble; nay, worse, so many vile shackles wickedly imposed upon the understandings and the consciences of men. The fabrication of these shrines, if not to Diana, yet to human pride and ambition, seems to have been the earliest employment of churchmen from the earliest times. The apostles were hardly dead, when these began to display their aspiring temper; and the probability is, that they will never cease their usurpation, till the great head of the church shall appear in person to put them down. Their influence in this country is less perhaps than in any other of christendom; but even here, something of the spirit of 'Lord Peter' appears.—It sickens one's very heart to hear every sectarian boasting, in the face of the world, from the pulpit and the press, of '*the perfect system of* OUR CHURCH.'

'Whatever difficulties and obscurities may attend some parts and passages of the scriptures, still I am fully persuaded, that they are amply sufficient to make wise unto salvation all and every one, who studies them under the impression of so great and awful a concern. Proficiency in the knowledge of them will be greatly facilitated by a spirit of lively and fervent devotion. To *candidates for the ministry* nothing can be more important that such a spirit. It should form their habitual temper, daily warm their hearts, and animate their studies.'

THE WILL OF GOD A COMMANDING MOTIVE TO ACTION.

HERE let me beg the reader to pause a while, and to consider particularly what is meant by the *will of God*, and how important and awful a motive to action it implies.

What can have a tendency to impress an attentive mind so deeply, or strike it with so much force, as to think in any circumstances, 'God *wills* me to *do*, or to *bear* this?' One such reflexion should be enough at all times to disarm the strongest temptations, to silence every complaint, to defeat all opposition and to inspire us with the most inflexible courage and resolution. Did we take more leisure to attend to this, we could not possibly behave as we often do. He, that when solicited to any thing unlawful, will but stop, till he has duly attended to the *sense*, and felt the *weight* of this truth, 'The Deity disapproves, and forbids my compliance,' must tremble at the thoughts of complying, and lose all inclination to it. When we think, who God is, and what his dominion and character are; nothing can appear so shocking to us, as that helpless, indigent beings, his own offspring, the effects of his power, the objects of his constant care and bounty,

should counteract his intentions, and rebel against his authority, or be dissatisfied with what he appoints. The most loud applauses and general friend-hip of our fellow creatures are nothing, and can have no effect, when separated from his. All opposition is impotence, when not approved by him: and the commands and threats of the whole world, could they be supposed to interfere with what we know he requires of us, would, if we had a just sense of things, be as much lost to us, as a whisper in the midst of thunder, or the attention to a toy in the moment of instant death and ruin.

What it is he wills, we can in general be at no loss to know. Whatever afflictions or disappointments happen to us, whatever pains we feel, or unavoidable inconveniences are mingled with the lot assigned us, these it is as certain that he wills us to bear, and to acquiesce in, as it is that we at all suffer by them; since it is demonstrable, that in his world and under his eye, nothing can befall us either contrary to or without his consent and direction. Whatever opportunities fall in our way of doing good, it is his will that we embrace and improve. Whatever our consciences dictate to us, and we know to be *right* to be done, that he commands more evidently and undeniably, than if by a voice from heaven we had been called upon to do it.—And when conscious of faithful endeavours to be and to do every thing, that we ought to be and to do, with what joy of heart may we look up to him, and exult in the assurance of his approbation! When employed in acts of kindness and love, in forming good habits, and practising truth and righteousness, how resolute and immoveable must it render an upright person, and with what fortitude must it possess his breast, to consider, 'I am doing the will of him, to whom the world owes its birth, and whom the whole creation obeys. I am following the example, imitating the perfections, and securing the friendship and love of that Being, who *is* everlasting truth and righteousness; who cannot therefore be conceived to be indifferent to those who practise them; and who possesses infinite power, and can cause all nature to furnish out its stores to bless me.'

Thus does religion elevate the mind, and such is the aid, and force, and majesty it gives to virtue. The most effectual means of forming a good temper, and establishing good dispositions, is the contemplation of the divine administration and goodness, We cannot have our minds too intent upon them, or study enough to make every thought pay homage to the divinity, and to hallow our whole conversation by an habitual regard to him, whose prerogative it is, as the first cause and original of all perfection, to be the guide and end of all the actions of his creatures.

Dr. Price.

FROM BISHOP HUME'S ESSAYS.—A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

Dr. Johnson thus speaks of his situation at Ransey, in one of the Hebrides. 'Such a seat of hospitality amidst the winds and waters fills the imagination with a delightful contrariety of images. Without is the rough ocean and the rocky land; the beating billows, and the howling storm; within is plenty and elegance, beauty and gaiety; the song and the dance.' 'Now apply this to the state of a good man's mind, rejoicing in tribulation. So sings a poet of *conscience*.

'Tis the warm blaze in the poor herdsman's hut,
That, when the storm howls o'er his humble thatch
Brightens his clay built walls, and cheers his soul.'

PATIENCE.

An Italian Bishop, who had endured much persecution with a calm unruffled temper, was asked by a friend how he had attained such a mastery of himself. 'By making a right use of my eyes,' said he. 'I first look up to Heaven, as the place, whither I am going to live forever. I next look down upon the earth, and consider how small a space of it will soon be all, that I can occupy or want. I then look round me, and think, how many are far more wretched than I am.'

PLURALITIES.

An ingenious French author (Boursault) relates the following story.—An Abbé, who had no preferment, exclaiming one day to Boileau against pluralities—'Is it possible,' says the ecclesiastic,' that the people you named, who have the reputation of being very learned men, and are such in reality, should be mistaken in their opinion? Unless these would absolutely oppose the doctrine laid down by the apostles, and the directions of councils, must they not be obliged to confess, that the holding several livings at the same time is sinful? I myself am in holy orders, and, be it said without vanity, of one of the best families in Touraine. It becomes a man of high birth to make a figure suitable to it, and yet, I protest to you, that if I can get an abbey, the yearly income of which is only 1000 crowns, my ambition will be satisfied; and be assured, that nothing shall tempt me to alter my resolution.'—Some time after, an abbey of 7000 crowns a year being vacant, his brother desired it for him, and was gratified in his request. The winter following he got another of still greater; and, a third being vacant, he solicited very strongly for this also, and obtained it. Boileau, hearing of these prefer-

ments, went and paid his friend a visit. 'Mr. Abbé,' says he, 'where is now that season of innocence and candour, in which you declared that pluralists hazarded their souls greatly?' 'Ah! good Boileau,' replied the Abbé, 'did you but know how much pluralities contribute towards living well!' 'I am in no doubt of that,' replied Boileau, 'but of what service are they, good Abbé, towards dying well?'

CHRISTIAN WARFARE.

A christian is a warrior by his profession, and has, through life, a succession of enemies to encounter. Pleasure solicits him in the days of his youth, ambition disquiets his riper years, and avarice infests his old age. His condition reminds one of that observation of Plutarch concerning the Romans of the first ages, that, 'If ever God designed that men should spend their lives in war, they were the men. In their infancy they had the Carthaginians to contend with for Sicily; in their middle age the Gauls for Italy itself; and in their old age they were obliged again to contend with the Carthaginians and Hannibal.'

Horne's Works, Vol. 1.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

Mr. Editor,—In the following hymn, founded on certain passages in the Apocalypse, [Revelation iv. 11. 3. xv. 3.] an attempt is made to retain, as far as possible, the very language of the sacred writing; and all the merit of the verses, if they have any, is owing to this circumstance.

Around the throne of God
The host angelic throngs;
They spread their palms abroad,
And shout perpetual songs:
Him first they own, Him last, and best;
God ever blest, And God alone.

Their golden crowns they fling,
Before his throne of light,
And strike the rapturous string,
Unceasing day and night:
Earth, heaven, and sea Thy praise declare,
For thine they are, And thine shall be.

O holy, holy Lord,—
Creation's sovereign King,
Thy majesty adored
Let all creation sing:
Who wast, and art, And art to be;—
Nor time shall see Thy sway depart.

Great are thy works of praise,
O God of boundless might;
All just and true thy ways,
Thou king of saints in light:
Let all above, And all below,
Conspire to show Thy power and love.

Who shall not fear thee, Lord,
And magnify thy name!
Thy judgments sent abroad,
Thy holiness proclaim:
Nations shall throng From every shore,
And all adore In one loud song.

While thus the powers on high
Their swelling chorus raise,
Let earth and man reply
And echo back the praise:
His glory own, First, last, and best,
God ever blest, And God alone.

From the Monthly Repository, London, 1822.

THE CHRISTIAN MOURNER'S PROSPECT OF DEATH.

The hour, the hour, the parting hour,
That takes from this dark world its power,
And lays at once the thorn and flower
On the same withering bier, my soul;
The hour that ends all earthly woes,
And gives the wearied heart repose,
How soft, how sweet, that last long close
Of mortal hope and fear, my soul!

How sweet, while on this broken lyre
The melodies of time expire,
To feel it strung with chords of fire
To praise the immortal One, my soul!
And, while our farewell tears we pour
To those we leave on this cold shore,
To feel that we shall weep no more,
Nor dwell in Heaven alone, my soul!

How sweet, while waning fast away,
The stars of this dim life decay,
To hail, prophetic of the day,
The golden dawn above, my soul!
To feel we only sleep to rise
In sunnier lands and fairer skies,
To bind again our broken ties
In ever-living love, my soul!

The hour, the hour, so pure and calm,
That bathes the wounded heart in balm,
And round the pale brow twines the palm
That shuns this wintry clime, my soul!
The hour that draws o'er earth and all
Its briars and blooms the mortal pall,
How soft, how sweet, that evening-fall
Of Fear and Grief and Time, my soul!

HEAVEN.

Then never tear shall fall,
The heart shall ne'er be cold,
And life's rich tree shall teem for all
With fruit 'more golden far than gold.'

Then those we lost below
Once more we shall enfold;
And there, with eyes undimm'd by woe,
The burning throne of God behold.

There the pure sun-bow glows
Unaided by the shower;
No thorn attends the elysian rose,
No shadow marks the blissful hour.

There roll the streams of love,
Beyond death's wintry power;
In light and song for age they move
By many a blest immortal's bower.

REVIEW.

ARTICLE I.

The sacred origin and divine authority of the Jewish and Christian Religions, argued from their internal evidences, in three Sermons. By ROBERT LITTLE, *Minister of the First Unitarian Church, Washington City.* Washington, 1823.

THESE sermons are preceded by a long and sensible preface, in which the author states his views of the manner in which revelation should be defended against infidelity, and pleads the claim of all who acknowledge the revelations of the Bible, to be called Christians. He thinks that much of the scepticism of the world has arisen from the indefensible things, which have been taught and insisted upon as essential parts of revelation; and that he consequently 'serves the cause of revealed religion most effectually, who shows, that the weak and vulnerable opinions, against which reason and wit have so often and so successfully played off their artillery, in reality make no part of the system.' In this persuasion, our author professes to abandon many points, in which some writers have entrenched themselves, 'as merely clumsy, ill constructed outposts,' not in any degree necessary to the safety of the citadel. For why, he very reasonably asks, should we think it necessary to show our love to christianity, by defending all the foolish things which its advocates have ever said. It is these things, which have furnished food for the objections and cavils, the sneers and ribaldry, of infidel writers;—who for the most part leave untouched the substantial and essential truths, to play off their argument and their wit against those things, which are either no part of the system, but only the fancies of its advocates,—or, if parts of the system, yet whose destruction would not affect the foundation and credibility of the whole. This idea is thus stated in the first sermon.

'Scepticks have dealt, I think, unfairly and unphilosophically with the records of the Mosaic institutions. They have exposed to the severest test of ridicule those parts of these ancient writings which either contain matter, or are couched in language, most alien from the purified principles of a better age, and incompatible with the fastidiousness of modern civilization; and because no well regulated mind can dwell with pleasure on the contemplation of such subjects,

they conclude that the people who retained them with sacred reverence in the volume of their political and religious code, could have no pretensions to the peculiar interpositions of Deity on their behalf. In this way the traditionary accounts of the origin of mankind, and the introduction of evil, (evidently derived from a much earlier date than the time of Moses, and perhaps after all, chiefly allegorical;) the vices and occasional brutality of some of the most distinguished ancestors of mankind, the cruel war of extermination which the Israelites waged against the inhabitants of Canaan—these and such like are triumphantly urged, as a sufficient refutation of all the claims set up on the behalf of that people, as the depositaries of a divine revelation. An impartial mind will pronounce the conclusion as too serious, and too weighty, for the premises to support.' pp. 3, 4.

After an introduction, containing many remarks of this nature, the preacher proceeds to exhibit what he regards as strong internal evidences of the divine origin of the religion of the Jews. His first mark is, *The pure and correct theology taught in their books and maintained by their public and earliest institutions.* It is impossible to account for the prevalence of such a religion, among such a people as the Jews, at so early a period of time, except on the supposition of a revelation from God. Every other pretence is unsatisfactory.

'These grand truths and correct statements concerning the divine nature and perfections, are now so familiar to us, that we estimate too low the possession of them. Nature and reason, you say, will teach them. But why did not nature and reason teach them to the Chaldeans, from whom Abraham separated that he might escape their offensive idolatries? Why did not nature teach the Egyptian sages these truths? And why should the wise founders of the Grecian republicks have been ignorant of them; and at a much later period, the polished and enterprising Romans also? Whilst the stupid, untractable, and ignorant Jews, discovered so clearly, and held so tenaciously, the sound, incontrovertible and immutable truth concerning God, and the worship due to him. There must be a reason for this, and let unbelievers assign an adequate and satisfactory one on their principles if they can.' p. 8.

'We may challenge the world to produce any writings either ancient or modern, in which the demonstrable truths of religion are taught with the purity, perspicuity, sublimity and simplicity, which every where meets us in the writings of the Jewish prophets; and there were some of them composed before the boasted sages of Greece had existence, or their country a place among civilized nations.* There is but one satisfactory and sufficient cause that can be assigned for this distinction.' p. 9.

* Homer the Greek Poet did not live till after the time of Solomon King of Israel: And Solomon was 500 years later than Moses. Now it is well ascertained

The preacher, under a second head, draws the same inference *from the sublime devotional services of the Jewish church.* These far excel all similar writings which the world has seen. Yet they are the productions of a people far inferior to some others in science, knowledge, and refinement. In the most splendid eras of learning, civilization and philosophy, the religious hymns and devotional sentiments of men were full of 'superstitions and puerilities.' How can we account for it, that this inferior and more barbarous nation escaped them all, except by admitting the truth of their communications from heaven?

The third mark of internal evidence which our author adduces, is, *the prophetical anticipations with which these writings abound.* Under this head, the prophecies of the Jewish scriptures are contrasted with the fabulous oracles of heathenism, and several predictions are cited, and compared with the events which have accomplished them; particularly the destruction of their own nation, and the springing up from the midst of them a prince who should establish a universal religion. Upon this last topic our author asks:

'How came these ancient Jews to know that their national religion was but a temporary and imperfect one; that it was preparatory to something better, brighter, more universal and permanent? What could lead them to imagine and expect that this system, so narrow and exclusive as it was in their days; should have a general and perpetual influence on the affairs of all nations? That one of their own countrymen should arise, endued with heavenly wisdom and moral strength, sufficient to be light and salvation to the ends of the earth?' p. 17.

It seems to us that the case is not accurately stated here, and that the argument would be stronger if it were. For the Jewish people had by no means drawn the inference from their prophecies, that their religion was simply a preparatory dispensation; it is evident that they anticipated a very different result from that which has actually occurred. It is quite clear that neither the prophets themselves, nor the nation in general, understood the predictions in the sense in which they have been accomplished and are accomplishing. The conclusion therefore, that these

that "as late as Homer's time the Greeks had not arrogated to themselves any superiority of national character; they seem not yet to have excelled their neighbours in any Science, Art or Civilization. The term Barbarian was not yet in use among them. They had not a name even for themselves collectively. A Peloponesian esteemed a Thessalian scarcely more his countryman than a native of Phoenicia or Egypt."

None of the Grecian States had even their Laws put in writing until 250 years after Homer; that is, until more than 700 years after the Law of Jehovah had been given to Israel and committed to writing by Moses. *Mitford's Greece*, Vol. 1.

prophecies must have been divine, rests upon the firmest possible foundations.

Immediately following our last citation, there is an animated passage, which we quote as a specimen of our author's manner.

'If indeed this expectation had been fallacious; if mere gasconading nationality, in the delirium of casual success, could afford a key to these triumphant expectations, and subsequent events had given no confirmation of them; then indeed our argument would fall to the ground.

'But when we read, as we do, in the broad page of incontrovertible history, that a descendant of the house of David, a Jew by birth and education, a messenger of Heaven, to establish rules of conduct, and give hopes of eternal happiness to man, has actually communicated the light of truth and grace, to the most mighty and distant nations; that idolatry, once triumphant, alike over savages and civilized men, has been renounced and abandoned by almost all; that empires, and kingdoms and republicks have alike submitted to the governing genius of this new religion, and acknowledged the authority of this spiritual legislator; that the mighty tide of christian principles has spread with resistless energy over Europe, from east to west, from south to north; that it has crossed the Atlantic Ocean, and in this New World diffused, and is diffusing, its all-potent efficacy; that it has ameliorated, and is ameliorating the condition of man every where; that under its enlightening and purifying influence, the human character is elevated and improved; that a just sense of human rights and duties prevails, and that despotism and slavery are daily becoming more odious and verging to their final extinction;—add to all this, when we perceive, as we may, an invincible re-action carrying back these principles to the source from whence they came, spreading the rays of christian truth, like returning morning, on the regions where a long dark night of Mahommedan superstition has usurped a dismal empire; and even further still, beyond where Ganges rolls its consecrated tide, presenting the simple volume of the Gospel to the inquisitive children of the east, that they may compare it with their Vedas and Shasters, and judge for themselves which points the way that leads to joys substantial and unfading; who can doubt but that this religion is destined to be universal? Who does not perceive that it sprang out of the Jewish code, developing more clearly its divine principles, and divesting itself gradually of every thing partial and superstitious? The prophets of old foretold all this; they "prophecied," says a New Testament writer, "of the grace that shall come unto you—they testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." (1 Peter, i. 10, 11.) But if they foretold it, they must have been divinely assisted to do so; and if they had supernatural aid then the system itself was supernatural; and we arrive at this conclusion, that the God and the religion of Moses and the Prophets, was the true God and the true religion: that this was the pure fountain whence

the healing streams of genuine piety and virtue were to flow to all people. The Mosaic dispensation forms a link in the great chain that connects the intellectual and moral history of man. To make it a subject of derision is equally indicative of ignorance and impiety. To attempt to invalidate its general truth and importance, by selecting obscure, irrelevant, or perhaps interpolated passages, at variance with the general spirit and tenour of the whole; is unworthy of an impartial and philosophical enquirer, but may please superficial thinkers, who having adopted a prejudice, are willing to go all lengths to justify it' pp. 17—19

The last of the three sermons is occupied in stating, in a similar manner, some of the internal evidences of Christianity. Having mentioned the *things which constitute the substance of christianity*, he observes as a first mark of divinity, that *these things are such as required a divine commission and supernatural aid to introduce and authenticate them.* This remark is founded on the connexion between Christianity and Judaism, or rather, it regards christianity in the light of an improvement and extension of Judaism; and, as the latter system was established by divine authority, argues that its improvement and extension must be by divine authority also. Under this head is introduced the argument drawn from the sublimity and excellence of our Lord's doctrine.

The second remark is, *that these sacred teachers and their contemporaries, have themselves assigned a reason, which it behoves us to submit to, unless we can refute it.* That is to say, they declared that they received their doctrine by revelation from heaven. If we cannot prove the declaration false, we are bound to believe it true.

The third remark is, *that the lives and conduct of these distinguished teachers were incompatible with the belief that they could be deceivers.*

The character of these sermons must be evident to our readers, from the outline and extracts which we have given. They do not pretend to present a complete view of the internal evidences of revealed religion; this, as their author intimates, would require a volume rather than a sermon. Their only aim is to present in a clear and strong light, some of the most important considerations by which their divine original is manifested. This has been done, and well done; but more happily we think, in respect to the Jewish than the Christian evidences. This, however, is principally owing to the circumstance, that twice the space is allotted to the former; and who can despatch the internal evidences of christianity in one sermon? This subject too has been so entirely exhausted, that a preacher writes without a

permission even to hope that he may say any thing new. Yet it is a subject which ought to be treated again and again, and of which preachers should never permit their hearers to lose sight. We were glad to find that Mr. Little had not only preached, but printed. We trust that his sermons will do good. They are bold, independent, and serious, calculated to support faith and promote virtue;—faith and virtue, which we trust he will be honoured as the instrument of God to promote in the metropolis of our country. His situation there is important and arduous; and we doubt not he will prove himself to be in boldness and prudence, in zeal and charity, in piety and knowledge, all that becomes the representative of the pure gospel, amidst reproach and opposition.

Since these remarks were prepared for the press, we have been highly gratified with the perusal of another sermon of this author, *on the duty of public usefulness*, preached in the capitol, at Washington. We should have been glad to take more particular notice of it, had we received it at an earlier hour.

ARTICLE II.

A Letter from David Holmes to the Church of Christ in Amherst, N. H. 8vo. 1823. pp. 58.

This is a communication from one of the deacons of the church in Amherst, announcing to his brethren the resignation of his office, on account of the change which has taken place in his religious opinions, and stating some of the grounds of that change. It is for this reason a document important to be presented to the public. It is another example of the force of truth in removing errors long and dearly held. It is another instance of a man of sense, standing, and influence, in the religious community, yielding up his opinions to a diligent examination of the scriptures; and risking obloquy and neglect from those associated with him, and by whom he has been honoured, for the sake of a belief which *they* deem a desertion of the gospel. Those who know what such men have to endure, know how to estimate the intrepidity and honesty with which they discharge their conscience. Our readers will thank us for introducing them to Mr. Holmes, and making them acquainted with the plain good sense, and quiet good temper, with which he defends the momentous change his mind has undergone. We can do nothing better than to extract a few passages, and leave them to speak for themselves. The first few paragraphs will show the state of facts.

'In the course of my researches after truth, I have during the past year, been led to differ widely from many of you, in some of my religious opinions. The object of this letter is to exhibit to you my reasons for declaring my disbelief of the doctrine of the Trinity, and not to gratify any love of controversy. This seems, indeed, to be my only resource; for since my change of opinion, I have remarked that an extraordinary degree of coldness has been manifested towards me, by my brethren in the Church. Most of them have carefully endeavoured to avoid entering into any conversation with me, on religious subjects, excepting our junior pastor; and he has called upon me only once since I fully made known to him my opinions, and that merely to admonish me of my error, without offering any satisfactory arguments to prove my opinions erroneous.

'Whether this marked neglect has proceeded from a fear of being corrupted by conversation with a "heretic," as I have reason to think I am considered by some, or from a consciousness of their inability to support their doctrines by sound reasoning, I am unable to decide. I have, it is true, forced myself into a conversation on the subject in which we disagree, with *three* of my brethren, whom I esteem, and with whom I have spent many, as I trust, profitable evenings, in religious conversation and devotion.

'But how wounding to my feelings to be told by one of them, that I was under the influence of the evil spirit; and by another, for whose character and piety I entertain the highest veneration, that I had forsaken Christ and the bible, and was building my faith on *authors*, as he expressed himself.

'I hope you will see in this letter, that, although you may think me in great error, I still sometimes look into the bible, and have not wholly forsaken it. If you have considered me in a dangerous error, why have you not proved it to me from the scriptures, why have you not called on me, and endeavoured to convince me of my errors? You have seen fit to take a different course. When you found I had disagreed with you in opinons, you stood off, and studiously avoided me. No one, I believe, laments the division that seems to be taking place among us, more than myself. But who has been the cause of this division? Must I profess to believe doctrines when I do not believe them? And when I declare my opinions, am I to be denounced as a heretic? Must I believe in doctrines which I do not find in the bible? In mysteries which have never been explained, and which are unexplainable, or else be denied the name of a Christian? Whom shall I believe, God, or man? If you say man (which you will not) what man? If you say God, (which you will and ought to say) I reply, I do not find what is called Calvinism in his word.' pp. 3, 4.

Then follows an examination of the New Testament, and texts are largely quoted upon the subject, accompanied by scarce any remarks, through twenty pages. The next portion of the pamphlet is made up of extracts from various authors, to the

fifty first page. It concludes with a few pages from our author, from which we extract the following.

'Is it not a fact, and well understood, that no one can be admitted to our church, but those who will profess to believe in the doctrines of the Trinity, election and total depravity; and that many, who were members before the Junior pastor was settled, are looked upon by most of the others as heretics, or heathen; who will be compelled wholly to withdraw from the communion. The line of distinction has been drawn so close, as to cause a division in our family circles, and to set the husband against the wife, the father against the son, the daughter against the mother, the Junior pastor against the venerable Senior pastor, and the friendly, and before kind neighbours, against each other. It will be in vain that you tell me, it is pure religion that has done this; I know to the contrary. It is the *divinity* of certain *opinions*. Where will you go to find a reason for all this?'

'The town, which might have been united and happy if allowed to think for themselves and to enjoy their own opinions, is now distracted and in confusion; one part virtually saying, by their actions at least, you are not fit to choose your own preachers you have never known the truth; you shall hear such preachers as we approve, and such doctrines as we have been taught to feel and believe; and the other part insisting that they will hear such preachers as they approve, that they will form their opinions from the word of God, and will not take their opinions on trust from any man. They hold indeed, that they have a right, and that they will exercise that right, to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences

'These difficulties, I think I have foreseen for more than two years; and I have sincerely lamented them. There are some, to my knowledge, whom I believe sincere enquirers after truth, and who would gladly unite with the church, and would cordially and feelingly say all that Philip required of the Eunuch, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," and would endeavour to "live as the grace of God teaches," but who could not in conscience profess to believe in the doctrines of Calvin; and who will soon unite with some other church, whose system is more conformable to the precepts and example of the great Head of the church. I suppose I may fairly be classed with that large and respectable portion of worshippers, whom you lately heard the Rev. Mr. Harris sneeringly call "rational Christians," with whom I ever wish to be found; and it is no small consolation to me, to believe that their number is fast increasing.

'We are told that the doctrine of the trinity is a mystery, but we are bound to believe it. I acknowledge it to be a mystery indeed, but I will not acknowledge we are bound to believe it. What authority have we from the scriptures to believe mysteries? What God has *revealed*, ought not to be called a mystery, and what have we to do with what he has *not* revealed? what practical effects can

result from a belief in mysteries? Surely it is not that faith which works by love to God and to man, and which purifieth the heart.

'We are also told, if we deny Christ to be the supreme God, that we "deny the Lord that bought us." But do Unitarians deny the Lord Jesus? are they not in all their books proving from the scriptures that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? Is it not the Trinitarian who denies the record which God has given of his son? for if Jesus Christ be God, what God is it that has given a record of his son?

'It has been asserted that Unitarians neglect the Bible. To prove that this charge is entirely groundless, we have only to appeal to their writings. The cause of Unitarianism has nothing to fear from a most thorough examination, or most critical knowledge of the scriptures, among all classes of people; and it is firmly believed that the people need only to be informed, and throw away prepossession and prejudice, and it must prevail. What should we say of a judge, who would hear the evidence on one side only, and then give judgment? Surely he would be justly liable to the imputation of partiality and would destroy all our confidence in his opinions.

'Is there not a large portion of Trinitarians and Calvinists who have formed their opinions from creeds and opinions of fallible men, rather than from the bible; who are confident that they know enough, and are of the number who have been taught of God? There are those who will not openly discourage free enquiry, but after all your researches, if you come to any different conclusions from them they will not hesitate to affirm, that you have not been taught of God.' pp. 52-54.

'The opinions of the junior pastor and many members of the church being so different from my own, and the system pursued, of admitting none as members of the church, but those who profess to believe in the Calvinistic doctrines, renders it unpleasant for me any longer to act as a deacon in the church. And you will no longer consider me as acting in that capacity. It is not because I consider it as a burden, for I would willingly be a door keeper in the house of my God; but for reasons already stated, and being persuaded that some wish me to retire.

'I desire your prayers for me, that if in error I may be brought to a knowledge of the truth.

'With this you have some of the evidence upon which my present opinions are grounded, and to my own Master I stand or fall.

'For the evidence of my faith I have appealed to the word of God, and not to creeds and inventions of men. The sincerity of my views, my labour and prayerful researches after truth, are known to Almighty God, to whom I appeal.

'And that you, and I, and all who read this letter, may effectually know the one only living and true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, will be the prayer of your sincere friend.' p. 58.

The perusal of this Letter has given us the sincerest satisfaction, and we doubt not its circulation among those, for whom it

is intended, will do good. God is raising up every where instruments to carry on his great work, and no honest effort will be lost. It is as true now as it ever has been, that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.

ARTICLE III.

Memoirs of the life of the late Mrs. Catharine Cappe, written by herself. London. 1822.

This is a most instructive and delightful book. The name of Mrs. Cappe, we hope, is familiar to our readers, and no one, who has read her Memoirs of her husband, the eloquent author of 'Discourses on Devotional Subjects,' or who has heard of her useful labours in the cause of religion and philanthropy, but will feel an interest in the history of her life. And we venture to say, that no one will be disappointed. It is indeed the history of a private individual, who had no advantages, and could command no influence, from rank or fortune; but for this reason, it is the more valuable. For with great simplicity and modesty of narration, it is the record of distinguished worth; of powers and virtues, admirably suited to domestic life, and exerted amidst embarrassments and sorrows, which are designed indeed under the discipline of a paternal Providence, to purify and strengthen virtue, but which too often prove fatal to the character. In the subject of these Memoirs they were sustained and sanctified by her filial views of the divine government, and by the purest devotion. She was distinguished also for her active benevolence, which was continually opening to her some objects for her enlightened exertions; and we have been surprised, that the life of a lady, spent for the greater part in retirement, should furnish such a variety of interesting, and, were it not for the sober reality, that no one can mistake, we should almost say, romantic scenes, that are here exhibited. To be perfectly understood, we can only direct our readers to the volume itself, which we trust will very shortly be re-published among us. In the mean time, we shall do little more than present a few extracts.

She thus expresses her views in becoming her own biographer; and they mark at the same time the great moral, which every attentive reader will not fail to derive from her Memoirs. Having observed, that it may be useful to others, that the experienced traveller should point out such facts as have fallen within his own

observation; or, in other words, should become his own biographer, she proceeds:

'It is not necessary in order to be useful in this way, that the writer should have filled any very high or conspicuous station; that he should have risen to eminence in the walks of literature or science; it is not even necessary, that he should have been distinguished for extraordinary talents, or admired for extraordinary accomplishments. On the contrary, it is rather desirable, if his Memoir is to be of extensive use, that he should have assimilated more nearly to the general mass of human characters; have been such as the ordinary beholder can see without envy; whose mental and moral progress he can easily trace in those common occurrences, continually taking place in human life, through which, in some form or other, he himself may expect to pass.

'Reflections such as these, and not, as she firmly believes, any vain expectation of an imaginary life in the fleeting breath of those who may succeed her, have induced the author of these Memoirs to take up her pen; and happy would she esteem herself, should any young persons of the rising generation, by a careful perusal of her simple narrative, be firmly convinced, that those trials and privations, which necessarily arise out of their various circumstances, and are therefore the deed of Providence, may be made, even in this life, highly subservient to their happiness and comfort; and, on the contrary, that the very attainment of those objects which are usually most eagerly pursued, issue not unfrequently in the ruin of their peace, their virtue, and their christian hope' pp. 3, 4.

Mrs. Cappe was born in 1744, at Long-Preston, an obscure village in Yorkshire, of which her father, the Rev. Jeremiah Harrison, was for many years the minister. When she was about four years old, he was preferred to the living of Catterick, where he was esteemed as a conscientious pastor, and a firm and benevolent friend. It was here and at York, that she passed most of her youth.

Her account of her earliest years is extremely interesting:

'I had one brother, nearly two years older than myself, who had the small-pox about the same time; but so much more favourably, that his good looks were not impaired and being like my mother in features and complexion, a comparison was often drawn between the brother and sister by the servants and others, in which he was the object of their admiration, and his sister of their compassion. "Ah, miss, you should have been the boy, and your pretty brother the girl," was the common exclamation. Happily, however, the change had taken place at so early a period, that it seemed to me a thing of course, and no feelings of jealousy were excited. I should have been disappointed, if I had not heard him admired; but knowing that I had not the least pretensions to beauty, I felt no mortification, and my ambition was turned into quite another channel.' p. 11.

The unfortunate history of this only brother, which is afterwards developed, might perhaps be traced to these early and injudicious praises.

'Of the effects produced by what may be called accidental circumstances, I will give,' she writes, 'the following instances. My father had an old man-servant, who had lived with him twenty years. He had a good voice, was an adept in psalm-singing, and particularly excellent in the following anthem, taken from the 12th chapter of Isaiah: "Behold, the Lord is my salvation! in him will I trust, for the Lord is my strength and my song, and he is become my salvation. Cry aloud and sing, for great is the Holy One of Israel. Alleluia." When I was very young he frequently took me upon his knee, and sung this anthem. Probably he hardly understood the import of the terms himself; most unquestionably I did not. I used to listen to him, however, with extreme pleasure; something of pious sentiment was insensibly generated, and the early association of great delight, with this song of praise and humble triumph, has given it an efficacy with me, to soothe the mind in many an hour of subsequent sorrow, which it would never perhaps have otherwise possessed. May we not hence conclude, that there is something erroneous in that mode of reasoning, which would defer all attempts to make religious impressions, until the principles, on which they are founded, are completely understood.' pp. 28, 29.

Mrs. Cappe's father was succeeded upon his death in 1763, in the vicarage of Catterick, by the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, afterwards well known for his conscientious dissent from the establishment, and for his faithful and disinterested sacrifices in resigning this living, when he had no prospect of even a comfortable subsistence. As this event was highly interesting to Mrs. Cappe, as well as exhibits a most instructive instance of Christian integrity and self-denial, struggling with the tenderest domestic attachments, we cannot forbear extracting the following.

'One of the first persons, I believe, to whom Mr. Lindsey fully communicated his intention of resigning his living, was his former college friend, the late Rev. Wm. Mason, who was at that time, Precentor in the cathedral of York, and so justly celebrated for his fine poetical talents. It happened in the following manner: Sir Marmaduke Wyvill, a friend of Mr. L.'s, being High Sheriff, he was requested to preach the assize sermon in the Minster, in July, 1773; and being invited to lodge in the house of Mr. M, their former intimacy induced Mr. L. to impart to him the resolution he had made. Mr Mason was electrified with astonishment and grief. He really loved his old college friend, thought justly of the soundness of his head and very highly appreciated the goodness of his heart; he was himself a very worthy, respectable character, but having devoted his time more to the study of belles lettres, than of the scriptures, mixing much in the world, and viewing the subject through

the false medium of its mistaken principles, he could not feel the necessity, nor comprehend the duty, of making such a sacrifice. Strict integrity, he was ready to admit, in all the transactions of social or commercial life, was an indispensable duty; it had ever been the rule of his own conduct; in respect to these, no mental reserve, however slight, ought, on any account, to be allowed; but to extend this to the usage of mere forms, by which no one was injured, and which might be considered as being simply official, was in his mind, to the last degree, visionary and absurd. He was indefatigable, therefore, in his endeavours to dissuade his friend from persevering in his resolution: he stated to him the deprivations he must suffer; the difficulties he would have to encounter; the obloquy to which he would subject himself; and at length, when he found him immoveable on every consideration that respected his own sufferings, he changed the mode of attack, and asked him if he had a right to subject Mrs. L. to so many inconveniences and hardships? Here he found that his friend was not invulnerable; his final resolution indeed, being the calm and deliberate result of many an anxious hour, he could not shake, but he could pour into the appointed cup, a tenfold portion of bitterness. I was at Catterick when Mr. L. returned thither, and never can I forget his altered looks, and depressed countenance:—his very recollection seemed to be impaired, as he answered our anxious enquiries about his health, as he feebly ascended the few steps leading from the garden to the entrance. "How is all this," he said, "can one indispensable duty ever really be incompatible with another?" We did every thing in our power to soothe and calm his mind; and, in a very few days, he was enabled to recover his usual serenity. This was in truth, "his hour of darkness;" but it happily soon passed away. As to myself, I felt nothing but resentment against Mr M. for taking, as I thought, an undue advantage. I did not sufficiently consider that the motive was kind and friendly, and that he conceived the use of every argument to be justifiable, which could save a self-devoted victim, on the edge of a precipice, from being precipitated to his own destruction.

'I would here pause a moment, to remark, what must indeed be observed by every one, who is in the habit of paying the smallest attention to what passes, at different times, in his own mind, how much and deeply we are affected in our progress through life, but particularly, before our moral and religious principles are by long consistent practice, become settled habits; by the outward circumstances in which we are placed, and the different associations which in consequence of these, we are led to form. So true it is, that religious and moral, as well as natural objects, alter their size and colour, and change their apparent magnitude and character, according to the relative positions and different mediums through which they are viewed.

'As things seem large, which we through mists descry.' p. 156—8.

Our readers may judge of the sacrifices to which Mr. and Mrs.

Lindsey submitted, on resigning the competence he enjoyed in the establishment, from the account, which Mrs. Cappe gives of the situation, in which she found them, on her first visit to them, after they had taken up their abode in London.

'In the following May, I realised the hope I had many months indulged, of visiting Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey, in London. I found them in a small lodging, upon the ground-floor of a house, in Featherstone Buildings, Holborn; the first floor was occupied by more affluent lodgers, and I had an apartment up two pair of stairs, in the pilgrim style. Mr. Lindsey had no place for the remnant of his library, but a small closet through the bed-chamber, which served at once for his study, and for their store-room and cellar. The books were piled upon each other, and as there was no room for a chair or table, were so contrived, as that part of them should serve as a seat, and another part as a writing-desk. Under all these circumstances, Mr. L. was cheerful, easy, and contented; the people of the house dressed their victuals, of which a very small portion sufficed. Among their earliest patrons, the late excellent Mrs. Rayner deserves a foremost place. This lady was a person of good fortune, of great energy of mind, excellent principles, and of unbounded generosity, where a great object was to be obtained; otherwise, of habits the most economical. She first heard of Mr. Lindsey by the following accident. Her maid one day asked her permission to go to Essex-Street, where she had heard that a gentleman was going to open a room, to preach a new religion. Permission was obtained, and on her return, Mrs. R. not being perfectly satisfied with the young woman's very imperfect account, determined to call upon the gentleman herself, which she did accordingly the following morning; and upon hearing a full explanation of the object intended, and of the circumstances that had led to it, she not only gave it her most entire approbation, but became afterwards one of his greatest and most steady friends.' p. 177.

The example of her venerated friends seems to have had a powerful influence on the mind of Mrs. Cappe. She did not for many years suppose that a disbelief of the doctrine of the Trinity, which the Established Church deems fundamental, involved in it any obligation on the part of an obscure individual, to separate from its communion. And she thus feelingly adverts to her early impresssions. 'Attached to the establishment by long habit; by respect to the memory of my father as a church minister, and by many a pleasing early association; having often anticipated with delight the return of that sacred day, when I should repair with those most highly honoured and beloved, to the ancient, venerable edifice, consecrated by the piety of successive generations; having often attended the village funeral, and connected together the firm belief in a glorious resurrection, with the mouldering relics revealed to sight by the affecting developements of a new

made grave;—having listened with awe, not unmixed with pleasure, to the simple stanzas of Sternhold, in the full chorus of village harmony; a strong predilection in favour of the whole was unavoidably generated; and it is highly probable, that I should always have continued to act under its influence, had I not been impelled to a more thorough examination of the subject by the train of reasoning I was led into by my venerable friend at Catterick; and which was afterwards more emphatically enforced by his own powerful example, and by the noble conduct of his exemplary companion.'

After a succession of pecuniary difficulties, chiefly occasioned by the improvidence of her only brother, Mrs. Cappe, (then Miss Harrison) with her mother, removed to York. Here amidst the exemplary discharge of the offices of filial affection, and with very limited resources, requiring painful economy, her benevolent spirit found exercise in several useful charities, which she essentially benefitted by her discreet and enlightened zeal. Her greatest enjoyment was on the Sunday in attending Mr. Cappe's Chapel, where she was a constant hearer, and in the course of that summer, (1782) heard from him his admirable series of sermons on the providence and government of God, which have since attained such high celebrity. Her acquaintance with Mr. Cappe, began with his successful defence of Mr. Lindsey in 1744, about a year after his becoming a widower; and was eventually productive of a mutual attachment, which however from various prudential considerations, was for some time *implied* rather than *avowed*. Of course it could not have been without the embarrassments, which under similar circumstances are ever in danger of occurring in any small community, where every one takes the deepest interest, and maintains the most watchful eye upon the matrimonial plans and progress of their neighbour; and in every history of which therefore, especially such as follows, we may be certain of never wanting readers to feel a sincere concern. We cannot avoid giving it in Mrs. C.'s words.

'This intercourse'—of friendship with Mr. Cappe—'in itself so useful and so pleasant, was however, in great danger of being interrupted by a report which became prevalent, that it was likely to terminate in a matrimonial connexion; and I hardly ever went into any company, that I was not either congratulated or condoled with upon the occasion. The talents of Mr. Cappe, it was said, were undoubtedly great, and his character unexceptionable; but then his situation in life—a dissenting minister, and with so large a family! In vain did I affirm, what was at that time the simple truth, that no other connexion than what then subsisted, had been thought of, or was intended; not much credit was given to my assertions: and although

I should have little regarded the report, as far as myself only was concerned, yet it assumed a more unpleasant aspect, when I found that it was often obtruded upon him also. How was I now to act? to continue the same frequent intercourse, without some explanation, was rendered next to impossible, and to decline it, was to give up for a punctilio, the most improving society, and the sincerest friendship. Should I continue passive, and let every thing take its course, I might subject my friend to the pain of a refusal; for I had now reason to believe, and I was afterwards confirmed in the belief, that the consequence on his part, should no explanation take place on mine, would have been a proposal, which I could not have accepted, without probable injury to his family, and increased embarrassment to my own. Mr. Cappe, indeed, knew that my property was small, but he did not know the impending ruin with which my poor brother was still threatened, nor did he know that I considered myself bound in honour, in the way already mentioned, in a debt of 700*l.* on my brother's account; and therefore, he could not see the full extent of those obstacles, which to my mind, appeared insuperable.

'At length therefore, after much anxious deliberation, I determined to write a letter to him, lamenting the current report, on the ground of the utter impossibility, that either of us, being so peculiarly circumstanced, could entertain a thought of any other connexion, than that which at present subsisted; and therefore requesting, being both conscious of this, that we might not relinquish our present friendly intercourse, on account of the mistakes or misapprehensions of others. It was evident from his reply, that the subject did not appear to him in exactly the same light in which I had put it, and that he wished earnestly for a further explanation.' p. 232–3.

These difficulties however were finally overcome; and in 1758, six years after her removal to York, she became the wife of Mr. Cappe. Her new situation opened to her only a wider field for her fine powers; and but for her aid as his amanuensis, during his protracted illness, most of those valuable works, of which she afterwards became the editor, would have remained, as she tells us in her memoirs of him, "locked up in an unintelligible short-hand.' Indeed such was her admiration of his talents and pulpit services, that the hope of being instrumental to such a work, and of benefitting the religious world by his publications, she declares to have had great influence with her in inducing her to become, as she chooses to express it, 'an inmate of his family.' She at once obtained the unqualified confidence and affection of his six children; and amidst severe domestic trials—of which she had early and long experience,—she must have maintained a most exemplary serenity, tenderness, and judgment. Of the variety and extent of these trials, no less than of her maternal affection, the reader will infer, when in writing of a period of

peculiar anxiety and distress she says, "The only event, that occurred during these two years*—(1792-3) from which we could derive any pleasure, was the adjudication of a gold medal to our youngest son (then a student in the hospitals in London) for a dissertation on a given medical subject."

No part of Mrs. Cappe's character was more striking than her unwearied activity in doing good: and her well known benevolence opened to her some scenes of suffering, which those, who live only for themselves, amidst security and comfort, would scarcely believe had a reality. We know nothing in fiction more touching than the history of the deserted young Irishwoman, for whom Mrs. Cappe interposed her generous and undaunted exertions. She was instrumental by her influence and perseverance of correcting some enormous abuses in the public charities, particularly the Insane Asylum of York; and the pamphlets, which she has published on these subjects, have, we understand, been eminently useful in exciting to investigation and reform in similar institutions in other parts of England. Of her humility—the total freedom from ostentation and display, with which she has penned her own Memoirs is no equivocal indication:—there is not a word here that betrays the smallest vanity;—and of her piety, not her writings only, but her profound submission to the will of God and her cheerful trust under complicated troubles, are convincing evidence. Her faith in the religion of Jesus Christ had a sustaining power. She prized the gospel as above all price: and amidst darkness, and care, and sorrow she never lost sight of its immortal hopes.†

We would gladly follow this inestimable woman through her long and useful life. She survived her husband more than twenty years, attaining the venerable age of seventy-seven. From her daughter, Miss Mary Cappe, who has annexed to these memoirs an interesting supplement, describing the few last months of her mother's life, we are informed, that though her bodily

* At this period Mr. Cappe was seized with the first violent attack of the disorder, which confined him to his house for many years before his death; and his son Dr. Joseph Cappe, a most promising young physician, died of consumption; while the charge of providing for his pulpit, which devolved on Mrs. Cappe, subjected them to much additional expence amidst very limited resources.

† Mrs. Cappe's writings, more particularly, her reflections on the history of the gospel, published with her husband's notes, sufficiently prove that she was an habitual and attentive reader of the scriptures "For my own part," says she, "I can truly say, that in the course of a long life, not wholly spent without observation, I have never yet seen an instance, where the bible has been habitually read, though the understanding respecting the genuine import of many passages may not always have been much informed, that the heart has not been made wiser and better, that many evil passions have not been corrected, although perhaps not wholly subdued, and the pious and benevolent affections further cultivated, improved and enlarged." p. 376.

strength gradually failed, her mind, even at that advanced period, exhibited few, if any, marks of decay. From the devotional meditations, which she has transcribed from her mother's papers, particularly one composed by her on her last birth day, upon entering her seventy-eighth year, it is evident, that the near prospect of departure awakened no painful forebodings, and disturbed in no degree the serenity and cheerfulness which formed such striking features in her character.

From the supplement, above-named, we derive the following account of her closing scene.

Having nearly concluded a letter* to the Rev. Dr. Channing of Boston, North America, [in which she had made affectionate remembrance of several of her American friends, who had either been introduced to her in York, or with whom she had corresponded] she writes, "But my pen is now quite tired, and I can only.....

'The tired pen' says her affectionate daughter 'was resumed no more. Soon after it was laid down, the venerable writer joined her daughters at tea, and was cheerful even to playfulness. After tea she read aloud to them as long as day light lasted. She then took her usual slight supper, and about ten o'clock, after having herself conducted the family devotions, retired to that bed, from which she was never more to rise. She slept composedly till a little after twelve, when she awoke, and said to her maid who always slept in the room with her, "I am very ill; call my daughters." They went to her instantly: medical assistance was immediately procured; but to no purpose. She never spoke again, and in about a quarter of an hour expired as tranquilly, as if she had again fallen asleep. Thus gently closed a long protracted life, which had been devoted to the fear of God and the service of mankind, and blest with all the natural fruits of piety and virtue; a life, which as it had been carefully regulated by christian motives and principles was supported and cheered in every vicissitude by christian privileges and hopes.'

Our readers, we are sure, will thank us for these extracts, copious as they have been, and they will not need any illustrations of our own. Such a life speaks for itself;—and it is good to contemplate it. We cannot however but reflect on the distinguished happiness of Mr. Cappe, in having been united to one, whose character was so congenial to his own; and who, amidst the suspension of his public services and the infirmities of sickness, prov-

* This letter is dated York, July 26, 1821, and, as we learn, was forwarded after her death to our friend Dr. Channing, by Mr. Wellbeloved, the highly esteemed colleague and successor of her husband. It is published at length in the supplement, and marks the lively interest she felt in the progress of religious truth, and the interests of humanity, in this country.

ed so eminent a blessing, not only by the assiduities of conjugal affection, but by the services few could have rendered, in the care of those invaluable writings,* by which, "being dead, he yet speaketh." For these, and for the beautiful delineation of his life, the religious world is indebted to Mrs. Cappe. And in adverting for a moment to the fond anticipations, with which she was accustomed to regard her re-union with her departed husband in a better world, it is reviving to reflect, how blessed in that heavenly state must be the renewal of friendships, pure and exalted, as theirs'; and with what superior joy they will contemplate together those powers and virtues, to the progress of which it was, even here, their first care and pleasure to contribute. —We repeat, it is good to contemplate such characters; and we should bless God for their examples. They may serve perhaps to rebuke that presumption, which would exclude from the name and hopes of christianity whatever does not accord with the vain dogmas of man's invention. But they serve for much more. They show to us the beauty of holiness; the transcendant dignity and happiness of the christian life. They show what, under the inspiring influence of religion, may be done, even by a single individual, for the instruction and virtue of the world; and how efficacious is the simple truth, as it is in Jesus, when received into the heart and made the principle of conduct, to enlarge the understanding; to sanctify the affections; to give birth to the kindest and most disinterested labours; to scatter the thickest glooms of care and sorrow; and to irradiate the shadows of death with the hope that is full of immortality.

ARTICLE IV.

Address delivered at the seventh anniversary of the Massachusetts Peace Society, Dec. 25, 1822. By Hon. Richard Sullivan.

This is a sensible and an elegant production. We listened to it on its delivery with unmixed satisfaction and delight; and of these feelings the perusal has brought no abatement. There

* We wish that the sermons of Newcome Cappe were extensively circulated and read among us. They are well adapted for the use of families; and many of them, particularly that "On the folly of undue anxiety;" on the duty of mingling gratitude with our sorrows; and those, which the author preached after a long confinement from his pulpit "on the improvement to be derived from severe illness;" are most valuable for instruction and comfort in the time of affliction. An edition of of this volume was not long since re-published by Wells and Lilly in this city; and for a more particular account of them, see Review, Christian Disciple, Vol. 1. 1819. Mrs. Cappe afterwards edited another volume, entitled Discourses chiefly on Prac-

is much originality in several of the sentiments advanced; and the illustrations of them are appropriate. The writer throughout opposes the position, that a passion for war is an innate and incorrigible passion. He shows in a convincing manner, that from the violence so often exhibited in the physical world, and from the habits of animals, who live by preying on each other, we are not, as some would persuade us, to infer that man was designed to make war upon his species; because man is a moral being; reason and religion make as much a part of his constitution as his animal appetites and passions, and were designed to govern him; and reason and religion are opposed to war. He refutes the position, that war is necessary as a corrective of a redundant population; and he shows, that the principles of humanity and justice, which all acknowledge should govern men in private life, should likewise extend to every form of social intercourse. He maintains that although the history of mankind, which is little else than a catalogue of wars, would seem to prove that a passion for war is natural and incorrigible, yet that such an inference would be false, because in all countries offensive wars have been the work of a few restless and unprincipled men; the great mass of mankind, in every community, if their sentiments could be fairly obtained, would be found always opposed to offensive war; and the interest which is manifested on occasions of military parade in time of peace is not owing to any natural ferocity of temper, nor has it any analogy to a warlike spirit. He proceeds to show, that history does not do justice to human nature, because it gives an account only of the vices of men; whereas there is a history of their virtues as well as of their vices. He remarks upon the evils of the condition of a country in which the people have no voice in questions relating to peace or war; but where they are permitted to enjoy their quiet, or are to be harnessed to the chariot of war according to the caprice or passion of their imperial driver; and, in conclusion, he recalls the attention of his audience to the happy and privileged condition of our own country, "whose policy derived from the character of the people and the form of its institutions will invariably be in favour of peace." In all these sentiments we acquiesce; and we think they cannot be too strongly impressed on the public mind.

There are several passages in this address, which we consider as singularly just and striking; and we shall do honour to our pages by the quotation of them.

tical subjects," which are also highly interesting for their familiar and eloquent illustrations of christian truths and duties. Her first literary effort, "if such" she says, "it may be called," was the abridgment of "Farmer Trueman's advice to his daughter; by Mr. Janeway"

'Unhappily for the only valuable use of history and a just view of human nature, political annals, in displaying the successful fortunes of warlike rulers, do not bring into notice, with sufficient prominence, the sentiments of the intelligent and virtuous on the character of a war policy—nor are we often enough permitted to see in one connected view, the glory of the warrior, the sacrifices by which it was obtained, and the consequent misery of the nation, which has been required to make them. What portion of the young, who follow with their admiration the Macedonian Alexander, reflect, that the character, which is so full of attraction to them, was lamented by the good among his subjects, as a misfortune to their country? The spoils of vanquished nations, it is true, were brought home to enrich the people. It was however but for a moment—they were to be corrupted and rendered worse than poor by their vices. Families were broken up to supply the ceaseless demand of new levies for the army, the passions were pampered, and every indulgence permitted to make excess habitual, the more easily to dissolve the ties of domestic life by creating a disrelish for its sober enjoyment. While some rioted in a momentary abundance, others were mourning in despair the loss of friends, who had perished in arms; and wise men bemoaned their country, as no less the victim of their monarch's ambition, than the nations, who perished by his sword. Such is the character of the scene, which with more or less colouring, will always be exhibited in the bosom of his country, however imposing may be the conqueror's successes, and the show of benefits attending them.' pp. 10, 11.

'We are accustomed to speak in terms of admiration of men, who have fought for the liberties of their country;—we dwell with enthusiasm on the spirit of our fathers. But it is not their valour or military skill which causes the emotion we feel. No! these have their proper place in our esteem; but it is the virtue, the moral grandeur, the disinterested love of country, which fixes our admiration. We recall the scenes of their achievements, not to retrace the details of their battles;—other men have fought as well, and their names have perished with them;—we recall these scenes with pleasure, because they have witnessed exhibitions of high moral excellence, and a spirit in no degree at variance with the spirit of peace and good will to men. Did their actions compel us to think less highly of their virtue than of that of Aristides and the Athenian people, who rejected with disdain a scheme of Themistocles, because, though highly advantageous to Athens, it was unjust in itself, their names might form so many brazen links in the chain of history, but their memories would never live in the hearts of their countrymen.' pp. 12, 13.

'If ambitious war, besides its injustice, is always unfriendly to the interests of the people, by whose government it is waged, and is felt to be so, it is certainly allowable for good men to wish, that in all countries, the body of the people may obtain such an influence in

public affairs, as effectually to check abuse of power by rulers. It shocks all our just notions of political economy and of government to suppose, that rulers can have one set of interests, and the people another;—that a monarch can be said to have advanced his own interest, and established his glory, by a course of policy burdensome, if not ruinous, to his subjects; that he can enrich himself by a measure which will impoverish them—that he should be authorized to view them, if he so will, as senseless weapons or instruments, by which he may annoy other nations for his amusement, and gather spoil, rather than as fellow beings, endowed with the same feelings and capacity as himself, having the same wants, and, each one. rights and interests of his own, which he has a fair claim to have respected and preserved inviolate by the power of the prince.

Surely the time cannot be far distant, when the principles, on which purely arbitrary government rests will cease to have an application in civilized countries. When it will no longer be thought necessary to submit to the absolute rule of one man, and to legalize all his infirmities and vices, as the only means of accomplishing the objects of government, and of preventing anarchy among the people. When all that is most brutal in human nature will not be expected of the people, and all that is corrupt and licentious tolerated in the prince—when his humours and passions will not be thought to have as fair a claim to a seat on the throne as his virtues—when it will be discovered that there is, and ever ought to be, a moral tie between the monarch and his subjects;—when it will be understood that there is a better measure of right than his absolute will, and a more just measure of duty, on the part of the subject, than unqualified obedience. When, in fine, the natural relation between government and the people shall be fully recognized, "and kings," to use the words of an ancient biographer, "will no longer be ambitious to be styled *takers of cities*,—*thunderbolts*,—nay, *eagles* and *vultures;* preferring the fame of power to that of virtue. If this were once so throughout the world, we might desire no surer guarantee that men would cease from war.'" pp. 18, 19.

The Peace Society has always had our best wishes; and nothing can be more correct than the sentiment with which this address is concluded;

'I should fail in justice to the occasion, did I not avail myself of it, to say to those, who either doubt the soundness of your views, or the efficacy of your labours, that if, as Christians, they desire that the spirit of Christianity may rule in the world, then are they with *you* in *heart* and *mind*.'

We are aware that many persons are in the habit of speaking contemptuously of the designs and expectations of this association; and others, who have felt most deeply the abominations and guilt of war, and have entertained the highest veneration for the pious and benevolent views of its founder and his associates,

have yet been almost inclined to consider it as the offspring of weakness or enthusiasm, and as quite inefficient in regard to its professed objects. We confess that we ourselves were at one time among this number; but our views of it have been materially changed; and we are persuaded that much seed has been sown, which promises an abundant and valuable crop. There can be little doubt that public opinion has already been materially affected by the publications of this society. The subject of war has been made a prominent subject of attention and discussion. Its criminality has been more deeply felt; its miseries and horrors have been more leisurely and largely surveyed; its pretended advantages and glories have been more justly estimated. Its opposition to christianity, we believe, is more considered than it has been. Public sentiment is in fact much more strong against war than at any former period; and we think it would now be more difficult, than ever before, to induce a considerable part of the community to engage in it. Nor is this sentiment confined to our particular community. Peace societies have sprung up not only in various parts of our own country, but in Great Britian and on the continent of Europe. Innumerable tracts on this subject have been extensively circulated in most of the languages of Europe. All this does good; and is the precursor to most important results. The consequences, to which it may lead, are not to be determined by the history of past times. A material change has taken place in the condition of the world. The world is now brought together by the unlimited range of commercial enterprise; education is every where extending its blessings, and every where contributing to enlighten and elevate the human mind. Heretofore the great mass of mankind have been little accustomed to think for themselves; they have been governed by authority, or precedent, or kept under by physical force. But within the last few years things in this respect have greatly altered. The intellectual improvement of men has taken an immense stride. Every subject of a political or moral character is now discussed upon its own merits in the highest and the lowest circles of civil society; and public opinion is to be in future the great engine by which the social machine is moved. This is already eminently the case with our own country; and in spite of all the fetters fastened upon the press, and all the attempts to arrest the progress of inquiry by the despotic sovereigns of Europe, it must be so there. In the present circumstances of the world, to oppose an effectual barrier to the progress of the human mind and of human society would be as vain as to attempt to repress the swelling tide. They may presumptuously stand before it, but they will be overwhelmed. How

important is it then that public sentiment should be enlightened and a right direction be given to it! and, if any thing is to be done in the case, what so likely to be effectual, as to enable society at large to form a correct estimate of the cost of war; we mean not its pecuniary cost, which in a comparative scale weighs nothing; but its expense of human blood and human life, of morals, improvement, comfort, and happiness. There are some expenditures, which from their vastness are not understood. When we speak of millions, the sum is so far beyond any thing which enters into the ordinary calculations of life, that we pass them over without any impression corresponding to their extent. Thus when we hear of whole countries ravaged and desolated by the march of immense armies, and of thousands and tens of thousands weltering on the field of battle, such accounts, from their greatness, to most men who have not been eye witnesses to scenes so unutterably terrific and afflictive, have so much the air of romance, that they are read with comparatively little emotion. It is by a just and exact exhibition of the miseries of war in particular instances, upon small communities, upon families, and individuals, that men will be most deeply impressed with its horrors and iniquities.

'A poor wretch, says Simond, well worth describing, offered himself to us as a guide; he had lost an eye, his arm was in a sling, and his head bound up with a dirty rag of a handkerchief; the large military hat over it half hid an unshaved countenance, deeply tinged with bile and sickness, rather than sunburnt; a pair of cast-off shoes, much too large for his feet, were fastened on with pack thread, and he wore about his wrist something, which might have been an officer's scarf, in order to keep his tattered coat from flying abroad. Salvator Rosa was stamped upon his figure; and when "sad historian of the pensive ruins," he began his narrative, the lowering expression of his countenance and surly voice and manner accorded perfectly with his general appearance. He had been an artilleryman during the seige, had been wounded and was just dismissed from the hospital.'*

'The town where we had fought no longer remained. We could not even distinguish the lines of the streets on account of the numerous dead bodies with which they were heaped. On every side we saw a multitude of scattered limbs and human heads, crushed by the wheels of the artillery. The houses formed a pile of ruins, and under their burning ashes appeared many skeletons half consumed—many of the sick and wounded had, on quitting the field of battle, taken refuge in these houses. The small number of them who had escaped the flames, now presented themselves before us, with their faces blackened, and their clothes and hair dreadfully burnt. In the

* Simond's Switzerland, vol. i. p. 57.

most piteous tone they besought us to afford them some relief, or kindly to terminate their sufferings by death.'

'The villages, which a few days before had afforded us shelter, were now level with the ground. Under their ashes yet warm, and which the wind drove towards us, were the bodies of hundreds of soldiers and peasants. Many an infant was to be seen cruelly butchered, and many a female savagely massacred on the spot which had witnessed her violation.'

'As we traversed the field of battle we heard, at a distance, a feeble voice appealing to us for succour. Touched by his plaintive cries, some soldiers approached the spot and to their astonishment, saw stretched on the ground a French soldier with both his legs fractured. "I was wounded," said he, "on the day of the great battle. I fainted from the agony which I endured, and on recovering my senses, I found myself in a desolate place, where no one could hear my cries or afford me relief. For two months, I daily dragged myself to the brink of a rivulet where I fed on the grass and roots, and some morsels of bread, which I found among the dead bodies."

'Three thousand prisoners were brought from Moscow. Having nothing to give them during their march, they were at night driven into a fold like so many beasts. Without fire, and without food, they lay on the bare ice, and to assuage the hunger, which tortured them, those, who had not the courage to die, nightly fed on the flesh of their companions, whom fatigue, misery, and famine had destroyed.'†

It is by such monuments as these, that the records of war are kept. It is by the desolated hamlet, by the trampled harvest, by the blazing cottage, by the sick and mutilated, by the scattered limbs and the mangled bodies, seized on while yet warm by birds and beasts of prey, by the agonies and tears of the widow and the fatherless, the houseless and the forlorn; it is, in a word, by deep tracks in human blood and human misery, that the path of the storm is to be followed with a heart-rending distinctness. The efforts of the Peace Society, to bring home the guilt and miseries of war to the conviction and feelings of men, cannot be, we are persuaded that they have not been, without avail.

* Labaume's Campaign in Russia, pp. 217. 225. 230. 231.

ARTICLE V.

A Collection of Essays and Tracts in Theology. By JARED SPARKS. *No.* I. *January*, 1823. *Contents—Turretin on Fundamentals in Religion, and Abauzit's Essays.* Boston, published by O. Everett, No. 13, Cornhill. Cambridge: University Press—Hilliard and Metcalf. 1823. p. 168.

THERE is no example of the establishment of a new system, either in morals or in religion, in politics or in philosophy, without a conflict more or less severe, with what went before it in men's minds. If we could find a single exception to this remark, one would think it would certainly be in the discoveries of Galileo, of Copernicus, and of Newton. But even these, having their evidence in the clearest demonstration, which of all evidence but that of the senses, suits itself best to every variety of capacity—even these shared the common lot of novelties, and had to force their way to general acknowledgment, through much debate and controversy, excommunication, and the fear of death. So has it also been with the extraordinary discoveries of God's will. Christianity itself, the fullest and the brightest of them all, has from the time when Jesus began to preach and say, Repent! till now, verified nothing more perfectly than it has the declaration of its founder, that he came not to send peace on earth, but a sword—a declaration than which we know of none that more clearly shows how thoroughly he knew what was in man. Not that to set men at variance, and to give them the weapons and the skill for able controversy, was to be the chief effect, or is the principal design, of our religion. This, it is true, it has most completely done; and this, in so far as it is good for men to differ and contend, there can be no doubt, was intended. But it was rather a natural consequence of his charge to subvert all other systems, and to introduce in their stead, a new and a better system from God, than the main purpose of his mission, to which this energetic language of our Saviour so pointedly referred. He knew, that the word he received from his Father, was to be promulgated by human instruments according to established laws—that men were to publish it to men, who, left even of themselves to judge not only what is right, but also what is true, would examine, with a thorough scrutiny, both *their* credentials as his apostles, and *his* credentials as the sent of God—that since a change of character, even in an individual, is one of the greatest alterations in nature, to reform the world would be a work of incalculable time and difficulty—that it could hardly be, that the prejudices and the errors, the abuses and the sins, the moral and intellectual darkness, which had been gathering for ages, could be

dispersed in an instant—that the passage of light, from mind to mind, and from generation to generation, is a very different thing from the passage of light from planet to planet, or from sun to sun, not only requiring much more time, but also having to meet with, and bear down, manifold hindrances and oppositions without number—in fine, that the whole constitution of man must be changed, and a new order of nature created, before even the kingdom of heaven could be set up without a struggle, or the prince of peace establish his sway, without many a conflict with its enemies, human imperfection and human ignorance, blind passions and mistaken interests, the skepticism of some and the credulity of others, the pride of philosophy and the thoughtless hardihood of folly.

We are far from thinking, however, that christianity has any fear of an overthrow in whatever contest it may have with enemies like these, or, indeed, with any enemies. For it is the word of God, which cannot return unto him void, but must inevitably prosper in the thing whereunto he sent it. But it will never have fully prospered, till it has thoroughly subdued every strong delusion, every mere device of the human understanding or of the human passions, so that truth and goodness may be all in all. And let us never for an instant despair of its final success, however slow it may seem to us in its destruction of error, of ignorance, and of sin. For the God of all wisdom determined from the first, that it should complete its work, not at once but by degrees, and it seems wisest and best, that each, striving to do absolutely all in his power to accelerate its progress, should, as to the result, possess his soul in peace and contentedly wait God's time.

But there is one thing, which, in thinking *how* its progress may be quickened, appears to us certain. Our religion can never be heartily and universally received, and it evidently must be so received before it can completely answer its end, till it is exhibited in its simplicity and purity. So long as contradictions and unintelligible mysteries are absurdly, and as if in mockery, held up as this *revelation* from God, and christianity is encumbered with human additions, which men are not only not taught to distinguish from it, but to regard as among its constituent principles—our missionaries, for all the service they can do the cause of Christ, had better stay at home. For at home, they may soon chance to learn, that reason and revelation were made by God, the author of them both, to go hand in hand; and that the chief occasion of our seeing so many infidels in christian lands, is the attempt of men to put these asunder though God has joined them. Thus they may perhaps be led also to suspect, why

their heathen brethren so obstinately turn the deaf adder's ear to a voice from heaven, and prefer their miserable superstitions, with common sense, a certain blessing, to the gospel as proclaimed in Calvinism, to them at least, a very doubtful good.

We have said these things may be learned soon. For, if we do not mistake the signs of the times, there is dawning upon the christian world a brighter day than it has seen for ages. There has gone abroad in the walks of every other science, a severe and active spirit of investigation, which has carried *them* to a degree of exactness and perfection, not only never before witnessed, but in many cases never before deemed possible; and it can hardly be, that it should not extend itself even to theology, in the nature of which there is nothing to prevent its producing effects as astonishing and as happy. It has indeed already shown that it is there and at work. Tares, which at the first springing up could scarcely be known from the wheat, are fast taking their distinguishing forms and proportions, and men already begin fearlessly to pluck them from the field and gather them for the fire. It is a work in which every sincere christian, every lover of truth, must heartily bid them God speed.

Such being the state of things, we cannot but pronounce the publication before us, not only a work, which would at any time be of great value to the professed theological student, to the general inquirer, and indeed to every one, who, to make himself a well informed man, thinks it at all necessary to know any thing of divinity—but also one which is now especially, a most important, judicious, and seasonable undertaking. Even considered in reference to the general remarks we have just made, it certainly does not recommend itself to us at all the less, either because it is to be so decidedly unitarian in its tone, or because it is to be conducted by a scholar of distinguished talents, who has so actively and successfully devoted himself to the unitarian cause. For we have miserably mistaken its design, and confess ourselves shamefully deceived as to the extent of unitarian views, if thrice repeated arguments against the doctrine of a trinity, or reasonings high of foreknowledge, will and fate—fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute, will constitute the whole, or any great proportion of the whole Collection. Its purpose, as described by the editor, in the remarks* with which he has introduced his proposals to the public, is—"to select such articles, as have intrinsic

* Had we not already copied these remarks into our pages entire, we should certainly do it here. They may be found in our number for May and June 1822—in vol. iv. p. 221. If our readers will peruse them, and give but a glance at the present state of theological inquiry in the land, they will doubtless think us rather sparing than profuse of praise.

merit, and are calculated to strengthen the faith of christians in the divine origin and authority of their religion—to diffuse a critical knowledge of the scriptures—to exhibit rational and consistent views of the christian scheme—to inculcate principles of religious liberty and toleration—to encourage the exercise of piety and charity—and to secure obedience to the laws of Christ?" —a purpose, which embraces not only the objects peculiarly dear to the unitarian, but also those of the highest interest to *every* christian. We rejoice that one of our own sentiments rather than any other, is thus endeavouring to accomplish it, only because we do believe such an one much the best qualified to take the proper measures to insure success.

Much has doubtless been done, and is still doing, for the diffusion of liberal and enlightened views of religion, of the scriptures, and of christian duties, by our periodical publications. But over these, a collection of essays and tracts in theology, made, as this is intended to be, with a single regard to their own intrinsic merit and no regard at all to the peculiar theological opinions of their writers, has many and important advantages. If judiciously selected, we shall find the same subjects as popularly discussed without having to regret so often as we do, that they are not more fully treated than is usually the case in periodical papers. Besides, although no religious system can be established or overthrown by authorities, still, when we find them in array against us, there is no small satisfaction in being able to show as many and as respectable on our own side. But a reasonable man would infinitely prefer to see the arguments, which decided even a few of the great and good to embrace his party, than never so long a catalogue of mere names, which is all that the limits of periodical works commonly afford us. And since our editor has determined to levy contributions to his main design from all who are able to supply them, we shall often, as in the case of Turretin, who, we believe is in high estimation with the orthodox, find a writer quite as decidedly with us in some points, as he is against us in the main.

We would willingly say more of this work, if we thought it would either increase the well deserved reputation of the gentleman to whose enterprise we owe it, or give a wider circulation to the work itself. But, even from the imperfect notice of it we have now given, every one must see, that it offers an invaluable addition to his means of religious information, which, we will venture to say, it is next to impossible to procure in any other way. The discourse and essays, which comprise the first number, are admirable. Though we had rather have nothing said of *fundamentals* at all, still, since men *will* think about them,

and talk about them too, it is well that there is upon the subject a treatise so liberal in its spirit, and so rational in its views as Turretin's. As to the essays of Abauzit, they would fairly fill us with astonishment at the little improvement made in biblical criticism since his day, did we not reflect, that common sense is the same in every age, and, if carried to the study of the scriptures, would in every age produce very nearly the same results. To each article is prefixed by the editor a short biographical account of its author, which enables us to read it with redoubled interest. There are notes besides occasionally added, which are highly valuable, both in themselves and as clear and necessary illustrations or correction of the text. Notwithstanding the uncommon beauty of its mechanical execution, this publication for cheapness is, we are persuaded, absolutely without a rival. If any one will but make a trial to procure the works enumera ted in the editor's proposals, as among those he intended to print, we are satisfied he will find he cannot do it, at twice nay four, times the expense, at which he can have them by subscribing for this collection.

INTELLIGENCE.

The annual report of the society for propagating the gospel among the Indians and others in North America, has been published since the appearance of our last number; and we regret that we have no room for the extracts, which we intended. The annual meeting of this society was held on the first Thursday in November last, and the discourse was delivered by the Rev. Abiel Holmes, D. D. of Cambridge.

We deem it a suitable piece of intelligence to be preserved in the pages of the Christian Disciple, that the present Lord Bishop of London, the Right Rev. William Howley, has in a charge, delivered to his clergy at a visitation in July last, uttered the following sentences, which in this day of advancing knowledge seem to bear something of a retro-grading tendency; and to intimate not obscurely a wish to bring things back to what his lordship would seem to think the happy quiet and security of the ignorance of past times.

'For a series of years preceding the French revolution, *the diffusion of knowledge and the cultivation of intellect*, in France and the neighbouring countries, *exceeded in such proportion the*

COUNTERVAILING POWERS *of religion and morality*, that all competent judges agreed, that some great convulsion was near at hand.'

Again,—'When we direct our attention to the *systematic culture of intellect* introduced in the course of a few years among all classes, *we cannot but feel an anxiety*, lest the balance of society suffer disturbance from this sudden increase of its momentum.'

Once more, 'There is no necessary connexion between knowledge and goodness; between the possession of intellectual power and a disposition to apply it to its proper ends.'

Now it is very true, that great talents and learning have been abused. Yet we had thought, that knowledge was an instrument of virtue; and that one way to make men good was to enlighten them. But his Lordship here teaches us, that diffusion of knowledge and improvement of intellect, *of themselves*, have an evil tendency, and will lead to mischief, unless *countervailed*, as he is pleased to term it, or as we should say, counteracted by some other means. As we profess under this head only to give intelligence, we leave our readers to make the inferences for themselves. But it seems to us, that his Lordship in these remarkable axioms is labouring with some very high church notions, which he chooses to intimate rather than express: such as, that it is very unsafe to trust men with religious inquiry; and, agreeably to the doctrine explicity laid down by Dr. Marsh, the present Bishop of Peterborough,* and which has found its advocates even in this country, "that it is inexpedient to circulate the bible among the common people, unless it is bound up with (or, may we here use the Bishop's term '*countervailed by*") the church catechism and prayer book.'

Through the kindness of a friend, one of the publishers of this work, we have just been favoured with a copy of five letters from William Roberts, teacher of the native unitarian congregation near Madras, addressed to Rev. T. Belsham, &c. and published in London since January last. They contain a satisfactory account of the state and prospects of the unitarian establishment there, and give additional evidence to what we have already known [See Ch. Dis. vol. ii. 1820.] of the fidelity, and zeal of this humble, but intelligent and truly interesting native teacher.

* This Prelate is well known, and is at this period exciting to himself no small attention in the House of Lords, as the propounder of *eighty-seven questions* with *thirty-two* others, supplementary and explanatory, which he applies as tests to all candidates for ordination, with a view to purge his diocese from calvinism. He contends, that the Arminian interpretation of the Thirty-nine articles is the true interpretation; and that calvinists should be excluded from the church.

'One of my hearers, about six years back, went from Madras to Hydrabad, and reading the New Testament, which he took from us, at his leisure hours, and reflecting on the principles he had heard among us, in time, a change took place in his religious sentiments; but he could not satisfactorily go to any other denomination of christian ministers, that were near, to receive baptism. Returning to Madras the beginning of this year he came to our chapel, on the first Sunday after his arrival, with four or five of his friends, and after sermon, made himself known to us. After relating his religious progress, and firm faith in christianity as profest by unitarians, he exprest his desire, that I should baptize him. Shortly after he was taken sick; and agreeably to his wish, I went to his house and baptized him. His name is Lazarus: his former heathen name was Handiapah. On this occasion there were present some of Larazus' heathen and Roman Catholic neighbours, and among them one Anthony, and his father, a very sensible good man, and both Roman Catholics.

'A few days after, Lazarus, though still sick, brought his mother, his wife, his two little sons, and two of his brother's children to the chapel to be baptized. On this occasion also, Anthony, his father, and some of the neighbours attended divine service and heard the discourse. They were well pleased to see and hear every thing done in their own language; and without unnecessary ceremonies. The father and son set their minds to enquiry, and joined our Society. Anthony has taken the place of a schoolmaster, and from his instructions, I hope to derive good to the unitarian cause."

Writing at a later date, he says 'Anthony, proves to be a zealous unitarian. Through his indefatigable exertions and exemplary life, in the course of twelve months he has brought over to join us, his wife, his sister, his mother, his brother, his brother in law, and their families. His endeavour is to become an unitarian teacher. Since he has kept a school for unitarian children, he has often been annoyed by his Roman Catholic neighbours; but no one has appeared to confute him by scripture proofs or cool reasoning.'

We wish our limits would admit of more extracts from these interesting letters.

From the Monthy Repository, for Dec. 1822, we extract the following. "Died, at Stoke-Newington, Dec. 6th, in his 75th year, Dr. John Aikin, (brother of Mrs. Barbauld,) well known to the world by his numerous elegant and useful contributions to English Literature; and the head of a family, which has perhaps done more than any other in England, for the promotion of knowledge, and the gratification of the literary taste.

THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

NEW SERIES—No. 26.

March and April, 1823.

SELECTIONS FROM THE POETRY OF CRASHAW.

It seems to me that, in their selections from the ancient English poets, neither Ellis nor Campbell have done justice to Crashaw. Campbell was fully capable of estimating his merits; and says, that there are many touches of 'beauty and solemnity' in his verses. He has not taken the trouble, however, of separating these from the mass of grosser matter; and I cannot help thinking, that he had not read Crashaw with much attention; for 'solemnity' is not altogether the right word to be used in his praise. The estimate, which was formed of him by his contemporaries, may be inferred from the poem of Cowley on his death, which commences with the splendid apostrophe:

> Poet and saint! to thee alone are given
> The two most sacred names of earth and heaven.

He has been imitated by Pope; and some traces of his expressions are to be found even in the poetry of Milton.

The date of his birth is uncertain. He took his bachelor's degree in 1634; and the same year published a volume of Latin poems, mostly devotional. In one of these, is contained the well known line, which has sometimes been ascribed to Dryden and others, on the miracle of turning water into wine:

> Nympha pudica Deum vidit et erubuit.
> The modest water saw its God and blushed.

He took orders; and was distinguished as a preacher for his energy of expression and strength of feeling. Having for some

time lived a life of enthusiastic piety, and of even austere and ascetic morality, he at last became a Roman Catholic. He died in Italy, as a canon of Loretto, about the year 1650. Cowley alludes to his conversion in the following lines:

> Pardon, my mother Church, if I consent
> That angels led him, when from thee he went:
> For even in error sure no danger is,
> When joined to so much piety as his.
> Ah Mighty God! with shame I speak it and grief,
> Ah! that our greatest faults were in belief;
> And our weak reason even weaker yet,
> Rather than thus our wills too strong for it.
> His faith, perhaps, in some nice tenets, might
> Be wrong; his life I'm sure was in the right.

Much of the poetry of Crashaw abounds in the faults of his age. It is full of extravagances, forced thoughts, and harshness of expression; showing, however, not so much a want of talents in the writer, as of a just and discriminating taste in the great body of readers. His religious poems written after his conversion to the Catholic Church, are overrun with that revolting imagery, which results from transferring to God the accidents and sufferings of the human nature of Christ; and with those shocking conceits, that a perverted ingenuity may draw from this source. But with all these faults, Crashaw has no common beauties. The charm of his finer poems consists partly in the fresh and bright colours of their language, and in the happy turns of expression which now and then occur, and still more in the purity and holiness of feeling which they discover, sometimes calm and deep, and sometimes exalted to enthusiasm. I will give some specimens.

DESCRIPTION OF A RELIGIOUS HOUSE AND CONDITION OF LIFE.

Out of Barclay.

> No roofs of gold o'er riotous tables shining,
> Whole days and suns devoured with endless dining;
> No sails of Tyrian silk proud pavements sweeping;
> Nor ivory couches costlier slumbers keeping;
> False lights of flaring gems; tumultuous joys;
> Halls full of flattering men, and frisking boys;
> Whate'er false shows of short and slippery good
> Mix the mad sons of men in mutual blood:
> But walks and unshorn woods; and souls, just so
> Unforced and genuine, but not shady tho':
> Our lodgings hard and homely as our fare;
> That chaste and cheap as the few clothes we wear;

Those coarse and negligent, as the natural locks
Of these loose groves, rough as the unpolished rocks·
A hasty portion of prescribed sleep;
Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep,
And sing, and sigh; and work, and sleep again,
Still rolling a round sphere of still returning pain:
Hands full of hearty labours; pains that pay,
And prize themselves, do much that more they may,
And work for work, not wages; let to morrow's
New drops wash off the sweat of this day's sorrows:
A long and daily dying life, which breathes
A respiration of reviving deaths:
But neither are there those ignoble stings,
That nip the bosom of the earth's best things,
And lash earth-labouring souls;
No cruel guard of diligent cares, that keep
Crowned woes awake, as things too wise for sleep:
But reverend discipline and religious fear,
And soft obedience, find sweet biding here;
Silence and sacred rest, peace and pure joys:
Kind loves keep house, lie close, and make no noise;
And room enough for monarchs, while none swells
Beyond the kingdoms of contentful cells:
The self remembering soul sweetly recovers
Her kindred with the stars; not basely hovers
Below; but meditates her immortal way
Home to the original source of life and intellectual day.

Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep: Every one will recollect this line in a later poem, which has none of the purity of that from which it is taken.

There are some pleasing passages in his verses on the death of Mr. Herrys.

Him while fresh and fragrant time
Cherished in his golden prime;
Ere Hebe's hand had overlaid
His smooth cheeks with a downy shade;
The rush of Death's untimely wave
Swept him off into his grave.
* * * * * *
I've seen indeed the hopeful bud
Of a ruddy rose, that stood,
Blushing to behold the ray
Of the new saluted day;
His tender top not fully spread,
The sweet dash of a shower new shed,
Invited him no more to hide
Within himself the purple pride

Of his forward flower; when lo!
While he sweetly 'gan to show
His swelling glories, Auster spied him,
Cruel Auster thither hied him;
And with the rush of one rude blast,
Shamed not spitefully to waste
All his leaves so fresh and sweet,
And lay them trembling at his feet.
I've seen the morning's lovely ray
Hover o'er the new-born day;
With rosy wings so richly bright
As if he scorned to think of night;
When a ruddy storm, whose scowl
Made heaven's radiant face look foul,
Called for an untimely night
To blot the newly blossomed light.
But were the rose's blush so rare,
Were the morning's smile so fair,
As was he, nor cloud, nor wind,
But would be courteous, would be kind.

* * * * *

The ripe endowments of his mind
Left his years so much behind,
That numbering of his virtues' praise,
Death lost the reckoning of his days,
And believing what they told,
Imagined him exceeding old.

The following verses are in a different strain. They are from a short poem 'on Mr. Stanihurst's death.'

Come then youth, beauty, blood, all ye soft powers,
Whose silken flatteries swell a few fond hours
Into a false eternity; come man,
Hyperbolized nothing, know thy span;
Take thy own measure here ——
———————— here put on
Thyself in this unfeigned reflection.
Here gallant ladies, this impartial glass,
Through all your painting, shows you your own face.
These death-sealed lips are they dare give the lie
To the proud hopes of poor mortality.
These curtained windows, this self-prisoned eye,
Out-stares the lids of large-looked tyranny:
This posture is the brave one; this that lies
Thus low, stands up, methinks, thus, and defies
The world—All-daring dust and ashes, only you
Of all interpreters read nature true.

Pope says

O Death, all eloquent! you only prove
What dust we doat on, when 'tis man we love.

And Juvenal had said long before

——— Mors sola fatetur
Quantula sunt hominum corpuscula.

The whole invocation quoted from Crashaw may, perhaps, remind one of a passage in Pope's 'Epistle to Mr. Jervas', where after speaking of the power of painting to represent

An angel's sweetness, or Bridgewater's eyes:

he proceeds:

Muse! at that name, thy sacred sorrows shed,
Those tears eternal, that embalm the dead.
Call round her tomb each object of desire,
Each purer frame informed with purer fire,
Bid her be all that cheers, or softens life,
The tender sister, daughter, friend and wife;
Bid her be all that makes mankind adore;
Then view this marble, and be vain no more.

The following verses may show how much of good sense was mingled with Crashaw's somewhat erroneous and perverted feelings of religion.

ON A TREATISE OF CHARITY.

Rise then immortal maid! Religion, rise!
Put on thyself in thine own looks: t' our eyes
Be what thy beauties, not our blots, have made thee;
Such as, ere our dark sins to dust betrayed thee,
Heaven set thee down new drest; when thy bright birth
Shot thee, like lightning, to the astonished East.
* * * *
These learned leaves shall vindicate to thee
Thy holiest, humblest, handmaid, Charity.
* * * *
This shall from henceforth be the masculine theme
Pulpits and pens shall sweat in; to redeem
Virtue to action, that life-giving flame
That keeps religion warm. * * * *

A similar character appears in his epitaph on Mr. Ashton. There is great felicity and point in some of its simple turns of expression.

The modest front of this small door,
Believe me, reader, can say more,

Than many a braver marble can:
'Here lies a truly honest man:'
One, whose conscience was a thing,
That troubled neither church nor king:
One of those few, that in this town,
Honour all preachers, hear their own:
Sermons he heard, but not so many,
As left no time to practice any:
He heard them reverently, and then,
His practice preached them o'er again.
His parlour sermons rather were
Those to the eye than to the ear.
His prayers took their price and strength
Not from the loudness, nor the length.
* * * * *
Peace, which he loved in life, did lend
Her hand to bring him to his end.
When age and death called for the score
No surfeits were to reckon for.
Death tore not, therefore, but sans strife,
Gently untwin'd his thread of life.
What remains then, but that thou
Write these lines, reader, in thy brow;
And by his fair example's light,
Burn in thy imitation bright.
So while these lines can but bequeath
A life perhaps unto his death;
His better epitaph shall be
His life still kept alive by thee.

The beginning of this epitaph is imitated by Pope in that on Mr. Fenton.

This modest stone, what few vain marbles can;
May truly say; here lies an honest man.

There is a magnificence in the commencement of Crashaw's Hymn for Easter-day, which is like the sudden opening of an extensive prospect.

Rise! heir of fresh eternity!
From thy virgin tomb.
Rise! mighty man of wonders, and thy world with thee.
Thy tomb the universal East,
* * * *
Thy tomb, fair immortality's perfumed nest.

But the peculiar genius of Crashaw is most richly displayed in two poems, from which I shall now give some passages. They are glowing with the dazzling conceptions of mystic devotion. There is, in some parts, a continued play of brilliant coruscations. The first is 'on a prayer-book sent to Mrs. B.'

Dear soul, be strong,
Mercy will come ere long
And bring her bosom full of blessings,
Flowers of never fading graces.
* * * * *
But if the noble Bridegroom, when he comes,
Shall find the wandering heart from home,
Leaving her chaste abode
To gad abroad
Among the gay mates of the god of flies;*
To take her pleasures, and to play,
And keep the Devil's holiday—
Doubtless some other heart
Will get the start,
And stepping in before,
Will take possession of the sacred store
Of hidden sweets, and holy joys,
Words which are not heard with ears,
Those tumultuous shops of noise,
Effectual whispers, whose still voice
The soul itself more feels than hears;
——— luminous trances,
Sights which are not seen with eyes,
Spiritual and soul-piercing glances,
Whose pure and subtile lightning flies
Home to the heart; ———
——— Yet doth not stay
To ask the windows leave to pass that way;
Delicious deaths, soft exhalations
Of soul, dear and divine annihilations;
A thousand unknown rites
Of joys, and rarified delights,
An hundred thousand loves and graces,
And many a mystic thing,
For which it is no shame,
That dull mortality must not know a name.

In these selections, I have kept out of view, as much as might be, the allegory running through the piece, under which our Saviour is conceived of as a bridegroom or spouse. Though it is managed with delicacy by Crashaw, it is intrinsically unfit for poetry. It is associated, however, with some beautiful expressions in the following lines.

O fair! O fortunate! O rich! O dear!
O happy and thrice happy she!
Dear silver-breasted dove!

* The name Beelzebul, (the final letter in the original being properly *l* not *b*,) has been derived from two Hebrew words, according to which it would denote 'god of flies.'

Whoe'er she be,
Whose early love,
With winged vows,
Makes haste to meet her morning spouse.
Happy soul, who never misses
To improve that precious hour,
And every day
Seize her sweet prey,
All fresh and fragrant as he rises,
Dropping with a balmy shower,
A delicious dew of spices.

The other poem before referred to, is similar in its character to the last quoted. It is in honour of St. Teresa. She, while a child, is said to have had a passionate desire for martyrdom; and to have plotted means for its accomplishment. But she died without attaining this glory.

Since 'tis not to be had at home,
She'll travel to a martyrdom.
No home for her confesses she,
But where she may a martyr be.
She'll to the Moors, and trade with them
For this unvalued diadem:
She offers them her dearest breath,
With Christ's name in't, in change for death:
She'll bargain with them, and will give
Them God, and teach them how to live
In him; or if they this deny,
For him she 'll teach them how to die.*

But she was not ordained for martyrdom.

——— Oh no,
Wise Heaven will never have it so:
Thou art love's victim, and must die
A death more mystical and high.

She is to die by the dart of love.

A dart thrice dipt in that rich flame,
Which writes thy spouse's radiant name
Upon the roof of Heaven, where ay
It shines, and with a sovereign ray
Beats bright upon the burning faces
Of souls, which in that name's sweet graces
Find everlasting smiles.
* * * * *
Oh how oft shalt thou complain
Of a sweet and subtile pain,

* "There taught us how to live; and oh! too high
The price of knowledge, taught us how to die."
Tickell's verses on the death of Addison.

Of intolerable joys,
Of a death, in which who dies,
Loves his death, and dies again,
And would forever so be slain;
And lives and dies; and knows not why
To live, but that he still may die.

* * * * *

Like a soft lump of incense, hasted
By too hot a fire, and wasted
Into perfuming clouds, so fast
Shalt thou exhale to Heaven at last,
In a dissolving sigh, and then——
O what! ask not the tongues of men.

* * * * *

Angels, thy old friends there shall greet thee,
Glad at their own home now to meet thee.
All thy good works, which went before,
And waited for thee at the door,
Shall own thee there——

* * * * *

All thy old woes shall now smile on thee,
And thy pains set bright upon thee:
All thy sorrows here shall shine,
And thy sufferings be divine.
Tears shall take comfort, and turn gems;
And wrongs repent to diadems.

* * * *

Thou shalt look round about, and see
Thousands of crowned souls throng to be
Themselves thy crown——
——— whose happy names
Heaven keeps upon thy score; thy bright
Life brought them first to kiss the light,
That kindled them to stars.

I will give one more specimen. The construction of the following poem is very awkward; but it is rich in strong and poetical thoughts and language.

'IN PRAISE OF LESSIUS HIS RULE OF HEALTH.'

Go now, with some daring drug,
Bait thy disease, and while they tug,
Thou, to maintain their cruel strife,
Spend the dear treasure of thy life.
Go, take physic, doat upon
Some big named composition,
The oraculous doctor's mystic bills,
Certain hard words made into pills:
And what at length shall get by these?

Only a costlier disease.
Go, poor man, think what shall be
Remedy against thy remedy.
That which makes us have no need
Of physic, that's physic indeed.
Hark hither,* reader, wouldst thou see
Nature her own physician be ;
Would'st see a man, all his own wealth,
His own physic, his own health ;
A man, whose sober soul can tell,
How to wear her garments well,
Her garments that upon her sit,
As garments should do, close and fit ;
A well clothed soul, that's not opprest,
Nor choaked with what she should be drest ;
A soul sheathed in a crystal shrine,
Through which all her bright features shine ;
As when a piece of wanton lawn,
A thin aërial veil is drawn
O'er beauty's face, seeming to hide,
More sweetly shows the blushing bride ;
A soul, whose intellectual beams,
No mists do mask, no lazy steams ;
A happy soul, that all the way
To heaven, hath a summer's day ;
Wouldst see a man, whose well-warmed blood
Bathes him in a genuine flood ;
A man whose tuned humors be
A set of rarest harmony ;
Wouldst see blithe looks, fresh cheeks beguile
Age ; wouldst see December smile ;
Wouldst see a nest of roses grow
In a bed of reverend snow ;
Warm thoughts, free spirits, flattering
Winter's self into a spring :
In sum, wouldst see a man that can
Live to be old, and yet a man.

I have seen the above verses quoted in some periodical publication, with six additional lines, which I give from memory.

In sum wouldst see a man who can
Live to be old and yet a man;
Whose latest and most leaden hours
Fall with soft wings, stuck with fresh flowers ;
And when life's sweet fable ends,
Soul and body part like friends,

* That is : attend to the rules of Lessius, prescribing exercise and temperance, if thou wouldst see nature her own physician, &c.

No quarrels, murmurs, no delay,
A kiss, a sigh, and so away.

These last verses are not in the copy of Crashaw's works which is before me; and I am uncertain whether they were written by him. If they are not, they are a happy imitation of his manner.

Many single expressions, lines, and short passages of much beauty might be selected from Crashaw. There is rich plunder for a modern poet. The following is from a versification of the 137th Psalm. *By the rivers of Babylon*, &c.

'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.'

Sing! play! to whom ah! shall we sing or play,
If not, Jerusalem, to thee?
Ah thee, Jerusalem! ah! sooner may
This hand forget the mastery
Of music's dainty touch, than I
The music of thy memory.

The following is the conclusion of a short poem, in which he expresses his regret, for having indulged too much in sleep.

But thou faint god of sleep, forget that I
Was ever known to be thy votary.
No more my pillow shall thine altar be;
Nor will I offer any more to thee
Myself a melting sacrifice: I'm born
Again a fresh child of the buxom morn;
Heir of the sun's first beams. Why threats't thou so?
Why dost thou shake thy leaden sceptre? Go,
Bestow thy poppy upon wakeful wo,
Sickness and sorrow, whose pale lids ne'er know
Thy downy finger; dwell upon their eyes;
Shut in their tears; shut out their miseries.

The last verses may call to mind the lines of Young.

Swift on his downy pinions flies from wo
And lights on lids unsullied by a tear.

'*Bathed in liquid light*'—'*The weary lids of wakeful hope*' are expressions of Crashaw. We might detach more such sparkles as these, or as the following:

And words more sure, more sweet than they,
Love could not think, truth could not say.

But it may be pleasanter for other readers to discover them for themselves.

The longest of his poems is a translation from the Italian of Marino. Its title is *Sospetto d'Herode*, (The suspicion of Herod.)

Some resemblance to the thoughts of the original and the language of the translation may be discovered in the Paradise Lost.* There are vigorous conceptions and striking expressions in the work of Crashaw, but there is little that fixes itself in the memory; and it is on the whole an uninteresting poem. There are two other lively and poetical pieces, from which I have not quoted. One is a translation of the poem of Moschus, called 'Cupid Runaway,' or as it is named by Crashaw, 'Cupid's crier.' The title of the other is 'Music's duel.' It is a versification of the story of Strada of a contest between a musician and a nightingale; in which the nightingale, being overcome, dies of exhaustion and grief. There are others of his poems which discover more than common genius; but in these the flame is, for the most part, mingled with thick smoke, and flashes bright only for a moment.

WITH WHAT EVIDENCE OUGHT WE TO BE SATISFIED IN RELIGION?

This is a question of more practical importance, probably, than is generally apprehended. Men are sceptical on the subject of religion, or their faith is feeble and mingled with doubts and uncertainty, not for want of sufficient evidence, but because they have not considered what kind of proof the subject admits of, and what degree of evidence ought to satisfy a fair inquirer. This state of mind is, perhaps, partly induced by a circumstance, which is in other respects of great value to us; I mean the time and manner in which religion is first presented to us. It is our privilege, and one of inestimable value we ought to esteem it, to receive its truths by early education. We draw in its great and momentous doctrines with our first instructions. The mind is formed, the character is shaped, the course of life receives its direction from it, even before we are capable of understanding its nature, or of having any distinct knowledge, or making any correct estimate, of the evidence upon which it rests.

But this advantage is not pure and unmixt. It is balanced in some measure by an attendant disadvantage. For our religion, pure and perfect as it is in itself, thus comes to us at first debased in a greater or less degree by its mixture with human corruptions. When afterwards, therefore, at a mature age, what was at first received upon trust becomes a subject of examination, and we have occasion to look into the grounds of our faith, we

* See Todd's Inquiry into the Origin of Paradise Lost.

proceed under the disadvantage that arises from a disposition to scepticism, which is produced by a discovery of what is false and erroneous in the views that had been received upon authority. And under the influence of the prejudice thus excited, there is danger that we shall demand too much, and insist on a kind of evidence or degree of proof, which the subject does not admit. Against such an influence it is important that we should be placed upon our guard.

It is doubtless a wise and kind provision of heaven in the constitution of things, that our faith should thus stand at first upon authority alone. But it cannot be imagined to be the design of heaven, that it should continue to rest on no other foundation. When afterwards, therefore, we seek other support, much depends upon our knowing with what kind of support we ought to be satisfied.

Nothing can be more clear, than the right which each one has to know the certainty of that which is proposed as the object of faith; yet he is required to make a reasonable use of that right. He is justly expected to pursue his examination with fairness and to accept of such kind of evidence, and to rest satisfied with such degree of proof, as the subject will admit of, and not to require that, of which it is not capable.

Now religion in general, and Christianity in particular, is offered to us only upon the ground of moral evidence. It can be offered to us upon no other ground. Its truths are proper objects of faith; and I shall endeavour to show, that proposed as they are, they are the objects of a reasonable faith, and not liable to objection; in the first place, because they stand on the same ground, in this respect, with other truths, which are received without hesitation, and upon which we act in the ordinary business, and in the common interests of life; and in the next place, because from the very nature of religion it were to be expected, that they would be presented upon such evidence, and such only.

Now with respect to other truths which are most firmly believed, and upon the faith of which we feel ourselves fully authorised to act, where even great interests are depending; how few are supported, or are capable of being supported by any other, than moral evidence? They have not the testimony of our senses—they are not subjected to the infallible text of consciousness—are not susceptible of demonstration. They rest upon human testimony, which though it *may* mistake or intentionally deceive, is yet deemed a reasonable ground of faith, where evidence of a different kind is not to be obtained. Or they are grounded upon presumptions, which have singly but little force; the

strength of which may be indefinitely increased by multiplication; yet can never be so multiplied, as not to be capable of deriving further strength, by being still further multiplied; or they are inferences drawn from repetitions of observation and experience, which it is plain can never be so often repeated, that further repetition shall not serve still to strengthen the conclusion. Yet for most of the truths, which we receive with unhesitating confidence, we have, and can have, no better grounds of evidence, than one or the other of these, which have been stated.

We hear of Moscow and Pekin, and we read of Jerusalem, and Babylon and Rome; and we entertain no more doubt of the existence of those cities, and that they answer to the descriptions, which we have had of them, than of the existence of those places, which we have ourselves seen. We hear too, and read of the great events, which are constantly going on in distant parts of the world, nor does it ever enter into our minds to call in question the reality of what is thus reported us, or the existence of those distinguished personages, who are represented to be the principal actors in the series of public events, because we have no better grounds for our faith, than human testimony.

Who is so sceptical as to doubt, whether there is such a place as Athens, and whether there once lived there such men as Demosthenes and Plato, any more than, at the end of the simplest and plainest mathematical demonstration, he doubts the truth of the result? We read the orations of the former and the philosophical writings of the latter, with unhesitating confidence of their genuineness, and can scarcely distinguish between the assurance we feel, that our mind is employed upon thoughts, which once passed through the minds of those great masters of Grecian eloquence and philosophy; and the certainty we feel in the consciousness, that in this act, we are exercising our own faculties upon those thoughts. Nor, where they purport to be treating of real persons and transactions, do we any more doubt the reality of the persons whom they introduce, and the facts which they relate, or to which they allude, than we doubt the reality of those which have once been the objects of our own personal observation, and are now of our distinct recollection.

Historical evidence is naturally, and by general consent is deemed to be, a proper ground of historical faith; and, in innumerable cases, he that should refuse it, and require other evidence, would be thought to advance very unreasonable claims, and to expect what the very condition of our being, the nature and limits of our faculties, and our relations to the past and the distant, do not admit.

We are supported then in the assertion, that important truths

resting on that kind of evidence upon which religion is offered, are received without hesitation, and make up a large part of human knowledge.

And upon what kind of evidence are men usually called to act in the ordinary *business* of life? Upon what evidence do they think it reasonable and safe to proceed?

In the pursuit of their daily occupations, men act upon the presumption, that the course of nature is regular and permanent,—that its operations will continue to go on, as they have done,—that the future will resemble the past; the same causes producing the same effects, and from similar motives a similar course of actions proceeding. Both in the natural and the moral world we make our calculations upon a settled and uniform disposition in the course of things. Yet this uniformity is not perfect, nor is the degree in which it is liable to exceptions fully known. Our expectations founded on the presumption of a regular and uniform course of things may be disappointed. In most cases we are obliged to accept of conclusions which are drawn from an inadequate number of instances; from observations extremely inaccurate and superficial; from experience that is far from complete and satisfactory. We depend upon the conduct of men, and regulate our own with reference to it, upon very imperfect knowledge of their character and dispositions. We rely, in reference to it, upon the operation of principles and motives, of the very existence of which, still more of their strength, we can have but uncertain proof; and which are besides liable to be counteracted by opposite ones.

Nor is it only in bold and rash adventures; in daring and intrepid deviations from the common track of business, that this takes place. It occurs in the most regular, safe, and common occupations. In the daily business of life we think it right and prudent to act, as if we had absolute certainty, where we have in fact nothing more, and perhaps even something less, than a high degree of probability; and we must proceed to act, if we will act at all, upon evidence, which leaves doubtful to a great degree the propriety, the tendency, and the result of our conduct.

In what manner, again, are we accustomed to seek and secure our wordly interest; and upon what kind of evidence are we willing, and do we think it safe to rely, in pursuing it? That we *have* any interest in all that is before us, is neither intuitively certain, nor capable of demonstration. We learn, that we have such an interest depending, by a course of moral reasoning. It is an induction from several particular things. It is an inference from our own past experience, and from the observation and ex-

perience of others. Hence our expectations of the future, and our provisions for it. Our foresight is the result of calculations from the past, and is more or less perfect, according to the extent of our inquiries, and the care and fidelity with which they have been conducted. Upon such information is all the business of the world conducted, and all its interests are pursued.

We rely on the regular and stated order of things, and presume, that what has usually happened will happen again in similar cases. We depend also on the general truth of human testimony, believing that we shall find the actual state of things, in any given case, substantially what it has been represented to be.

The husbandman expects the seasons to return in their usual order of succession, accompanied with their usual characteristics, and commits his seed to the ground in the spring with the hope of harvest in autumn; and plants in his youth the tree, that is to yield fruit to his old age; nor is deterred from either the one or the other by a consideration of numberless contingences, which may defeat his hopes and render his labour useless.

The merchant, relying on human testimony, ventures his property abroad, sends it to distant countries, which he has never visited; and exposes it, and his person also, to winds and seas, the character of which he has learned, not from his own personal observation, but from the declarations of others. He is not afraid to put at risk all that he most values,—not his property only, but his safety, his liberty, even his earthly being; in the confidence, that he shall find the elements upon which he depends to transport him, such as they have been described; and that the countries which he shall visit, and their climates,—the men that inhabit them, and their customs, manners, languages, wants, and dispositions, will answer to what he has been told respecting them.

In the most ordinary transactions in our social intercourse, what have we to serve as a foundation for mutual confidence, but the credit which we give to human testimony? And on what do we place dependance respecting the conduct of others, or the result that is to follow from the course of life, which we pursue ourselves, but calculations founded on experience, which may yet be fallacious: inferences drawn from the past, which we have learned to apply to the future?

How readily does every man, notwithstanding the risks to which it is exposed from imperfection of knowledge and imperfection of virtue in the judges, submit his cause to the decision of a court of justice! Not only our property do we deem it safe thus to place at the disposal of others, but what is dearer, our liberty, our reputation, and our lives.

When sick, will you make no exertions for the recovery of health, because none can be made with the certainty of success? Will you apply no remedy for the disease, because none is infallible? Will you ask no aid of the physician, because his skill is imperfect, and because the remedies, which he shall prescribe, will be of uncertain efficacy, liable to be misapplied, and when misapplied, liable to increase the disease instead of giving relief?

In poverty, do you cease from exertion to improve your condition, and make no endeavours to extricate yourself from embarrassment, because whatever efforts you may make, they may fail of being successful, and even become instrumental in involving you in deeper ruin?

The food, which you shall take to allay the suffering of hunger, may generate a fatal disease, or may strangle or suffocate you in the act of receiving it. Will you then abstain and perish?

The cases might be multiplied without end, in which it is the condition of our being to be thus placed between alternatives, which require our acting upon imperfect knowledge. We are appointed to act, if we will act at all, where certainty is denied us, both as to the prudence and success, and as to the propriety of the course we shall pursue.

Can it be pretended that there is greater uncertainty on the subject of religion, than has just been stated in relation to the common business and interests of life? And if there be not, the reasonableness of listening to its evidence, and attending to its claims will not be questioned, and we must be convicted to our own consciences of a criminal inconsistency, if in such circumstances we are regardless of its claims and reject its evidence.

But there is a further view of the subject, which is not to be overlooked. The evidence of religion, besides being such as we are satisfied with, and constantly act upon in our other concerns, is such as were to be expected from the very nature of religion itself. The nature and design of religion require, that it should be offered upon such and only such evidence, as we are speaking of. Any other than moral proof, any that should leave no room for the exercise of moral freedom, any that should force assent, whatever were our will and disposition, as it must level all distinction of character, would be inconsistent with the ends of moral government. But religion necessarily implies moral government. There can be none without it. It implies that we are in a state of trial; of trial, which is both a discipline, and a probation of virtue. And it is certain, that so far as religion itself makes a part of our trial, so far as it is presented to us, as a matter of free choice, and we are accountable for our choice, either as respects its reception, or its practice, there must be *that* in its

demands, or its *evidence*, which shall exercise the faculties, and furnish opportunity for the proof of attention and fidelity, and in general, for the manifestation of character.

If the demands of religion be such, as to call for the controul of any of the appetites and passions, or the natural affections; such as to oblige us to forego present for future good; such as require us to give up that, which is apparent for that which is real; and in general compel us to lay a restraint upon our inclinations, and to bend them to a compliance with the will of God, and our sense of duty; so far have we in the very substance of its duties the elements of our trial.

But all this, important as it is, can hardly be supposed to constitute the whole of human trial, so exceedingly partial must it prove to be, and unequal in different persons. In some, the conflict between sense and reason, appetite and intellect, passion and conscience, the animal and the rational and moral man, may be severe; in others it may amount to little or nothing. So exact in some men is the balance of the several parts of the constitution, that as to the external practice of virtue, it scarcely furnishes the occasion of discipline and trial at all. What *they* need is some trial of a different kind; something that shall serve as a test of their intellectual integrity; something that shall furnish the opportunity for manifesting, whether they will with fairness and honesty investigate the grounds of duty, weigh the evidence of truth, and submit to a laborious and patient inquiry, to ascertain *what* they are to believe, and *how* it is their duty to act.

Now trial of this kind is furnished by the nature of the evidence, upon which the whole of religion rests. It is the trial of *attention* to the subject, which is presented to us in such a manner, as cannot but show, that we have a deep interest in it, to be secured by attention, or lost by neglect; a trial of *diligence*, that is, whether we will examine the subject so fully, as not to err through carelessness or neglect; a trial of our *fairness* and *uprightness*, ascertaining whether or not we will make an impartial estimate of the value of evidence, and accept and allow its just weight to such, both in kind and degree, as is applicable to the subject, and not requiring that, of which its nature is not susceptible.

This part of human probation, it is apparent, applies in some degree to all men; but chiefly to those, who are the least affected, and have their fidelity and obedience least exercised by the other and more ordinary circumstances of trial. It furnishes a test also of a higher kind. It gives opportunity likewise for the practice of some virtues, which could not exist, or not in the

same degree, if the voluntary powers were more restrained than they are; especially if their exercise were wholly superseded by irresistible proof. 'It gives opportunity for the exercise and the display of candour, seriousness, humility, patient inquiry, submission of passions, interests, prejudices, to moral evidence and probable truth. Habits of reflection are formed, and that previous desire to learn and to obey the will of God, is brought into exercise, which forms, perhaps, the test and merit of the virtuous principle, and which induces men to attend with care and reverence to every credible intimation of that will, and to resign present advantages and present pleasures to any reasonable expectation of propitiating his favour.'*

We see then the reasonableness and the utility of religion being placed on the ground of moral evidence. More than this also appears. So far as religion consists in a moral probation, it is clear that its very existence depends on this, since it must be wholly destroyed by that, which should make it cease to be a moral trial. But is it not evident, that it must wholly cease to be a moral trial, were its evidence absolutely irresistible? All trial depends on supposed uncertainty of some kind, either as to the evidence of truth or duty, its nature, its obligation, or its consequences. Where there is no room for an unfaithful mind to raise a doubt, there can be no test of its faithfulness. No man ever cast himself from a precipice to prove his disbelief of the existence of the material world; and no man ever felt indifferent about the condition of to-morrow, because he doubted whether, if he then continued to exist, he should have any interest in it.

In the concerns of the present life, it is the degree of contingency, which we find in almost every thing, that gives room for the faculties to be exerted, and lays the foundation of all that difference of character, which consists in wisdom and folly; in a prudent attention to present interest, and careless neglect of it. Let there be in all things, as there is in some, absolute certainty, and none of this trial could exist, and none of this development of character take place.

So also in religion. Let there be absolute certainty,—let evidence be irresistible,—let there be no possibility for negligence and carelessness to mistake or be deceived, nor for a dishonest mind to deceive itself; and where would be the test of obedience,—where the trial of virtue,—where the manifestation of character? The external practice of virtue would be produced; and if this were all that was intended by the moral gov-

* Paley.

ernment of God, its purposes would be fully accomplished. But the external act alone is a mere physical, not a moral effect. It is arresting the arm of the murderer, but leaving his dispositions uncorrected,—his purposes unchanged. It is preventing the deed of cruelty and outrage, but leaving unchecked and unaltered the malignity of the heart, and the depravity of the will. A check is given to the execution of wicked purposes, but the wickedness of the heart remains, disguised perhaps, but not corrected.

So far as religion is a discipline of virtue, and a moral trial: its design being to form a character of moral excellence, and to prove it; so far the means, which it employs, the evidence upon which it rests, the manner in which it is proposed, and the sanctions which it applies, must all be such, in their nature and circumstances, as to consist with freedom of choice; such as to make the character and course of life, not a matter of coercion but of free and deliberate preference; such in fine, as shall bend the will and guide the heart, establish the principle and form the temper; so that the external act, and the habit of life shall be but the development and outward expression of what is formed within.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

SIR,

The Sermons of Reinhard deserve to be introduced to the acquaintance of the English reader. He was Court preacher in the kingdom of Saxony, and died in 1812. For thirty-five years, he had annually published a volume of sermons. This fact would seem to testify their merit, unless some peculiar circumstances, of which we are not aware, created for them a factitious popularity. From the two volumes, however, which I have perused, I do not wonder that the German public were unsated with the frequency of the treat which this fine theologian set before them. I have selected for translation, a discourse, which will not only give your readers an idea of the ingenuity, exact and perspicuous method, noble liberality, and occasional eloquence of Reinhard, but the subject of which seems also to be well adapted to the character of your Miscellany. You are at liberty to make what use of it you please; either to print it wholly, or in part, or to suppress it altogether. Should it prove acceptable to your readers, I should be very happy to contribute others for their perusal, or even if there were encouragement, to

prepare a select volume for publication. We know but little of German preachers, except from Zollikoffer. Reinhard, I think, will not shrink from a comparison with him. His sermons abound with ingenious criticisms, profound general discussions, simple and direct pathos, and the most comprehensive and conciliatory views of Christianity.

———.

SERMON PREACHED ON MISERICORDIAS DOMINI SUNDAY.

GOSPEL FOR THE DAY; JOHN X. 12—16.

* Grace be with you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ; Amen.

† Short as is that portion of the gospel, my hearers, from which I am to discourse this day, yet its contents are too important and too rich to be exhausted on a single occasion. I shall, therefore, at present, confine myself solely to the subject which forms the conclusion of the passage, and which, not only considered in itself, but also on account of the numerous misconceptions to which it has given rise, deserves our whole attention. I allude to the explicit declaration of Jesus, '*Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one flock,* ‡*and one shepherd.*' No proof can be required, that Jesus in these words speaks *of the extinction of the separation which at that time existed between Jews and Heathen;* that he promises the establishment of a mutual intercourse between those two classes of men, and an

* Many of the Sermons begin with this scriptural salutation.

† In the Lutheran churches of Germany, the text is always a part or the whole of the gospel for the day. This custom must fetter the preacher very much in his range of topics. The passage of scripture portioned out is often very small, but from that passage he is obliged to preach annually, as regularly as the year comes round. We are often compelled at least to admire our author's ingenuity in submitting to the custom, if we pity his constraint. The Evangelical Lutheran Synod at New York, in the preface to their excellent Liturgy, thus express their ideas of this cramping rule, and leap over its restraints with characteristic independence: 'There is an impropriety in congregations confining themselves, year after year, to these portions of the sacred volume, and neglecting all the rest, when they meet together for instruction and prayer. Besides, although some of these selections are excellent, not a few of them have been chosen injudiciously, or are so unnaturally torn away from the context, as to be dark and unedifying, instead of exhibiting a clear and connected view of the great facts, truths and lessons, contained in holy writ, especially of those which are most interesting to Christians. It is very desirable, that other and larger sections of the scriptures should be read in our religious assemblies.'

The publishers also justify their strictures by the example of some churches in Germany; and indeed, we understand that the exceptionable custom alluded to is going fast into decay throughout that connexion.

‡ *Flock*, and not the '*fold*' of our common translation, is the true rendering.

intimate connexion among the nations of the earth by means of the sacred bond of religion. For that this was his grand aim, he elsewhere variously declares; particularly in the last command which he left with his apostles, at his ascension into heaven. They were, after that event, to proclaim his doctrines to all the nations of the earth; all previous distinctions in religion were to cease; all men were to be initiated into the name and religion of the Father, Son, and Spirit; *go forth*, this is his commission, *go forth and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

What Jesus thus commanded, my hearers, was done; the gospel was quickly and widely extended; it has penetrated into regions, the existence of which was at that time unknown; and still its career has not ceased; still it opens for itself new paths, and gains new triumphs. But where, where *is the union into one flock*, of which Jesus speaks in the gospel? Where is the cordial, intimate, fraternal fellowship, which he was to establish? Have not Christians from time immemorial been distracted into parties? Have they not, as much as possible, separated from each other by means of fixed denominations and external institutions? Do they not adhere with jealous severity to these distinctions, and frown on every attempt at reconciliation? Do not these opposite parties break out into mutual reproaches and accusations, and dispute with each other the prerogative of belonging to the true flock of Jesus? Have not matters between them more than once proceeded to the exhibitions of a vehement hatred, to cruel persecutions, to sanguinary wars? And have not many among them believed that they were particularly vindicating to themselves the title of the only and true flock of Jesus, while with a furious jealousy they tolerated none others near them, and sought to invade every thing for themselves?

What shall be said to this, my hearers? Which of all these sects has the right on its side? Where is the pure, the genuine flock of Christ? And what is become of the promise to collect all the nations of the earth into a single fold? Among the beneficent purposes of Jesus, does this alone remain unexecuted? Has he perhaps undertaken something, which cannot be carried through? And is that union in religion, which he was to effect, nothing more perhaps than a beautiful dream, which never can be realized? Such are the inquiries, to which I shall this day attempt an answer. I feel, my brethren, I feel, that I am here involved in a subject, surrounded with the greatest difficulties, a right management of which requires much acquaintance with the spirit of christianity, a pure, unbiassed mind, and a heart full of true christian philanthropy. But hear me without

prejudice; forget not that the church, to which you yourselves belong, abhors nothing more than an intolerant and denunciatory spirit; that one of its most prominent maxims is, to yield justice to every other party, and above all to bear in mind the words of the apostle, *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he stands or falls*:—Thus shall that delusion of imaginary and insignificant differences vanish before you; you shall perceive a unity in spirit and in love, where others see only strife and contradiction; you shall be compelled to acknowledge with heartfelt emotion, that the good shepherd has kept his word, and that there is, there is, a happy and united flock, of which he is the master, and which he is leading to God and to Heaven. Let us implore of God, my brethren, to enlighten us, and to enlarge our souls for a fair and clear comprehension of his purposes in Christ Jesus our Lord. This grace we implore in silent prayer.*

GOSPEL FOR THE DAY, JOHN X. 12—16.

But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

It is then the concluding words of the gospel just read, my hearers, on which our reflections will at present dwell. Ah, often has the sense of these words been misunderstood. *One flock* Jesus intended to collect together, yet still parties have from the beginning existed among Christians, which have hated, denounced, and persecuted each other; still these divisions continue now, and all attempts to remove them, all endeavours to establish a perfect uniformity, have been fruitless; still †one of these parties of christians even declares itself exclusively the true flock of Christ, and looks upon all, who do not adhere to it, as sheep gone astray, who must be restored by every possible method to the sheepfold of Jesus, and if circumstances permit, must even be driven back by force. How, amidst such distrac-

* The proemium of each discourse usually ends with this formula of supplication. Then follows the gospel for the day. After which the preacher enters into the body of his discourse.

† The church of Rome.—*Tr.*

tions can that unity of faith and of religion find place, of which Jesus speaks in the gospel, and which he promised should be realized among the nations of the earth? Ah, we shall entangle ourselves in great difficulties, we shall be inclined to judge very unrighteously of others, we may even be induced to treat them harshly and cruelly, if we misinterpret the promise of Jesus in the gospel, and understand that uniformity in religion, which he foretold, in any other light, than such as may be drawn from his own explanations. In order to guard ourselves against mistakes so fatal, let us now strictly inquire into what was intended by the promise of Jesus, that *the nations of the earth should attain to a uniformity in religion.* I hope to answer this inquiry in the clearest manner, if I first show *what could not be intended by that uniformity;* and then *deduce its real nature from the declarations of Jesus and his apostles.*

The promise of Jesus to bring the nations of the earth into a uniformity with respect to religion, to unite them in one flock, needs only to be misinterpreted and falsely understood, and there arises disunion, mistrust, sectarian bigotry, persecution; there arises an animosity, in which the beneficent influence of the doctrines of Jesus is almost entirely lost. Let me then before proceeding farther, expose the most dangerous misinterpretations, of which the proposition is susceptible, and which have really been made of it,—and thereby show, *what that uniformity in religion, which Jesus promises to the nations of the earth, certainly is not.* Jesus, for instance, did not intend *to effect a perfect uniformity in all the conceptions and opinions that are entertained of religion; nor a perfect uniformity in the modes of divine worship; nor lastly, a perfect uniformity in public creeds;* we have only to remember the constitution of human nature, we have only to enter a little way into the spirit of christianity, we have only to observe the express declarations of Scripture, most clearly to perceive, that the promise of Jesus could not possibly have reference to either of these three kinds of uniformity.

Jesus did not intend to effect a perfect uniformity among all the conceptions and opinions that are entertained of religion. For such a uniformity is *an utter impossibility.* That in *common life* the attempt would be vain to remove differences in thoughts and opinions, we all well know, since we assume the fact to be acknowledged, that every man has his peculiar mode of thinking, his individual taste, his particular habits. Can it be otherwise in *Religion?* Can the same men, who are never entirely united on the common concerns of daily life, which appeal partly too to the mere external senses, be perfectly united on that subject which is out of the reach of the senses, and which can only be

apprehended by the hard efforts of reason? It is true, that the original constitution, *the capability for religion*, is of the same kind in all men, they all possess the same powers of mind and heart; they all draw, moreover, from the same common sources of nature and scripture. But are not those powers of mind and heart infinitely diversified *in degree;* do they not exist in every individual man, with peculiar circumstances, in peculiar relations and associations, in peculiar measures of vividness and strength, and must there not arise out of this state of things a great diversity of opinions? Moreover, are not the powers of every man *developed* under peculiar circumstances, directed sometimes one way and sometimes another, sometimes more and sometimes less assisted by education, and do there not hence arise different capacities of all kinds? Is not the *particular effort*, with which every one, especially in religion, labours for knowledge and conviction, just as diversified, and must we wonder, if he, who inquires for himself, arrives at other conclusions than he, who blindly believes,—if the cold thinker judges differently from the fiery enthusiast? And what shall I say of *the sources of religious knowledge?* Does not *nature* present herself to our contemplation from different sides, and has she not almost as often led to superstition as to truth? Is any thing more ambiguous, indeterminate, obscure, than the words of human language, especially when they represent things beyond the senses? And consequently does not every man understand *the scripture* after his own particular way, and collect from it ideas which have more or less of peculiarity? Do we not daily observe that men may be unanimous in words and expressions, and yet be far apart from each other in the things which they signify? Has not, finally, the experience of all times incontrovertibly taught, that more of strange opinions, more of religious controversies, more of opposition to peace and concord, have never shown themselves, than when attempts have been made to *enforce* a perfect uniformity? No, my hearers, Jesus did not intend to take away the freedom of our minds, he did not intend to alter the constitution of our nature, he did not intend to effect impossible things. Just as much as he devoted himself to giving a universal extent to certain general doctrines of religion, just so little did he require, that they should be conceived of by all men in exactly one and the same manner. Every one was to receive them according to his own capacities; every one was to investigate and prove them for himself; every one was to contemplate them from his own particular point of view; every one was to use and employ them according to his own circumstances. The uniformity in reli-

gion, which Jesus intended to bequeath to the nations of the earth, was not designed to be a perfect identity of all religious ideas and opinions.

Quite as little was it intended to be *a perfect identity in the modes of divine worship.* The religion, which we owe to the Son of God, is not an external ceremonial service, as all the other religions of the world are, and as the Mosaic dispensation in part was. No, the aim of Jesus was far more elevated; *God is a spirit*, said he, *and they who worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth*, they must honour him with the understanding and the reason, and by works of unsullied virtue. And his apostle adds: *the kingdom of God is not meat and drink;* that is, Christianity consists not in observing distinctions about food, *but righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy ghost*, it consists in genuine amelioration of character, and heartfelt spiritual happiness. On this account Jesus has not, like Moses, prescribed directions about holy days, and new moons, and sabbaths, and religious purifications, and rites and sacrifices; all this, as the same apostle assures us, was *simply the shadow of that which was to come, of which the body is in Christ;* that is, from Christ we have every thing of a superior order, the aim and tendency of his religion is true and everduring perfection. With the exception, therefore, of two external institutions, which Jesus has expressly prescribed, namely, *Baptism and the Lord's Supper*, all other parts of public religious service are left entirely to the views, the discretion, the consciences of Christians; they may adopt those arrangements which are most conformable to circumstances; they are permitted to consider by what external ceremonials the truth may be most successfully extended, zeal for all good most certainly enkindled, reverence towards God, faith in him and his promises, hope in him through Christ, most abundantly nourished and most touchingly exhibited. It is allowed, that with respect to their *value* and their *usefulness*, the institutions of public divine service may very much differ from each other, and be more or less instrumental in promoting the great aims of christianity, faith in God, genuine amelioration of character, and successful preparation for eternity. Nevertheless, complete uniformity among them is neither necessary, nor possible; the greatest dissimilarity among external and ecclesiastical constitutions takes not away the unity of the flock of Christ, which consists entirely in other things. *This* then shall not be a stumbling-block for us, that the form of the public service of God is so diversified among Christians; that one portion observes few, and another many, and

each its own ceremonies; it belonged not indeed to the designs of Jesus, to establish a perfect uniformity in these things.

But least of all did he design to effect *a perfect uniformity in public creeds.* It is just and reasonable, that those Christians, whose ideas of religion most nearly coincide with one another, should also unite together; that they should exhibit a summary of their convictions in commonly approved phraseology, and perpetuate them by means of such formularies; that they should compose their own articles of belief, which must be received and approved by every one, who wishes to join them, and by which they publicly separate themselves from every other denomination of different persuasions. But do you believe, that it could have been the purpose of Jesus, to bind all Christians down to one single *formulary* of this kind, and *thereby* to secure the unity of his flock? Are not all these creeds of *human* origin; do they not contain doctrines, which each party, according to *its own* mode of explaining scripture and of using reason, regards as true and indisputable? But must it not be free for every christian to read the scripture himself and to employ his own reason? Can his fellow-christians assume the least possible authority over him on this point? Are they not *disciples of the scripture*, as he is; are they not men, who may themselves err? Must not every sect, if they would be humble, and mindful of human weakness, acknowledge, that their creed, how firmly soever they are persuaded of its truth, can yet lay no claim to *infallibility*, and on no account be laid by the side of scripture? Shall not therefore every christian exercise the unalienable right, to adopt out of all the public creeds extant, that which most correctly expresses *his own* views of the true sense of scripture, or even, in case none of them gives him satisfaction, *submit himself to none?* Would not persecution and tyranny ensue; would not all free inquiry into the truth cease; would not a mere human authority be placed in competition with the divine authority of the scriptures, and even in preference over it,—if any single christian sect should declare its own to be the only true and infallible creed, and enforce a rejection of all others? No, my hearers, it could not have been the design of Jesus to effect a perfect uniformity in public creeds. *One is your Master*, said he himself, *even Christ.* But would it not be following other masters, would it not be honouring the human interpreters of his words as highly as himself, if we should adopt any one public creed as faultless and infallible, and maintain, that subjection to it is the only passport to eternal happiness? Neither a perfect uniformity of all religious ideas and opinions,—for such a uniformity *is not possible*—nor a perfect uniformity in modes of worship,—for such a

uniformity is *not necessary*—nor lastly a perfect uniformity in acknowledged creeds, did Jesus design to effect, for such a uniformity would be *the constraint and submission of our reason beneath human authority.*

Far more elevated, far more divine, is the meaning of the words, *There shall be one flock and one shepherd.* Let me then *from the explanations of Jesus and his apostles, determine the true nature of that uniformity in religion*, to which the nations of the earth were by him to be conducted. *Unity in the worship of the one true God ;—unity in faith in the Messiah whom he has sent ;—unity in endeavours after holiness and in brotherly love ; lastly, unity in the hope of eternal life with God.* have all been effected by Jesus ;—this is the universal religion, into which he designed to collect the nations of the earth ; uniformity in *these* things, amidst all the diversities of opinions, institutions, and formal creeds, is possible ; these must constitute the tender, sacred, happy bond which holds together the church of Christ, without oppressing it, without destroying that freedom, so essential to the improvement and happiness of the human mind.

Unity in the worship of the one true God, Jesus designed to introduce, and so far to establish uniformity. The abominations of idolatry bore sway, until his time, among all nations, excepting the Jews ; the wisest men in cultivated countries scarcely perceived the follies attached to the worship of their gods ; the multitude at large were sunk in the most shameful superstition, and lived without God in the world. This state of things was designed to be altered ; the darkness, which covered the earth, was to disappear ; the worship of idols was to be destroyed ; that which hitherto had been the prerogative of Israel alone, was to be exchanged for the universal blessing of all nations ; they were all, without exception, to learn the knowledge and worship of the one true God, the creator of Heaven and of earth. Can it be doubted, that Jesus intended to effect this kind of uniformity ? Is not the doctrine of a single and supreme God the foundation of all religion, and consequently also of Christianity ? Does he not say expressly, *this is eternal life, to know the Father, the only true God ?* Was it not the first thing, to which his apostles urged attention, go where they would, *that men should turn from false gods to the living God ?* Has not christianity effected this happy exchange wherever it has been established ? Has it not purified the best portion of the earth from all idolatry, and consecrated innumerable men to the worship of their creator ? Here then is one sort of uniformity in religion, by which the nations of the world were to become a single blessed flock, a mighty and honourable family of God. This earth, which was profaned

by the most disgraceful superstition, which was covered with the altars of the false gods, which was defiled with all the abominations attached to their worship, was to be exchanged into a pure, holy, honorable, temple of God; from all regions and corners of it, in all languages and tongues, praises and adorations were to ascend to the author of the world, and that too to him alone; amidst all the diversities of conception with respect to him, amidst the innumerable degress of light and of copiousness, with which the knowledge of him should be distributed among nations and individuals, still, all were to be directed *to him*, all were to be penetrated with reverence *for him*, all were to be consecrated as *his* flock;—unity in the worship of the one true God was one of the aims of Jesus.

And next, *Unity in faith on the Messiah whom God has sent.* In this too the nations of the earth were ordained to be one; to consider Jesus, as he was, the infallible promulgator of the will and counsels of God, the exalted mediator, through whom God will confer upon our race his greatest benefits in time and in eternity. *This* truth, connected with the foregoing, the doctrine of the one true God, he himself declares to be the sum and substance of the religion, in which he would unite mankind. *This is eternal life*, he says in a prayer to God, *that they should know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* He says expressly, *he who believes on the Son, shall not be condemned; he who believes and is baptised*, that is, he who engages himself by baptism not only to the worship of the one true God, but also to faith in his son Jesus, *shall be saved.* And this was also the doctrine of his apostles; they everywhere proclaimed the design of God to lead the world by his son to wisdom, virtue, and felicity; they sought every where to extend the belief, that man must expect all good from God through Christ, on his account, through his mediation, and with the means which God has established by him. They every where testified, that *he, who has the Son of God, has life, he who has not the Son of God, hath not life.* You perceive therefore, without farther comment, that he, who would belong to the flock of Jesus, and be a christian, must adhere to Christ, and expect from him all good in time and eternity. But you perceive too, that more than this is not indispensibly necessary to the unity of the faith and of the flock of Jesus. It is very conceivable, that men may agitate a number of inquiries upon the person of Christ, upon his connexion with the Father, upon the manner and way, *by which* he is the author of our blessings, that they may erect a variety of systems upon these points, and that they may in various ways extend or narrow the application of the general truth, that *God has given us salvation through*

Christ. And so it has happened; christians have often contended about these subjects; have sometimes understood scripture one way, and sometimes another; have been divided into parties; have drawn up their views into private formularies; have composed them into public creeds, and in this way formed particularsocieties and churches which have externally departed very far from each other. But is that uniformity hereby destroyed which Jesus designed to effect? Amidst all the variety of views, which different sects of christians have entertained respecting Christ, is not the grand truth laid as a foundation, that *God has sent him for our benefit, he is our Lord, and the author of our salvation?* Is not this the central point where every thing meets again together; and amidst all the freedom, with which every christian, according to his knowledge and capacities, must conceive of God's purposes in Christ, does there not still reign in this quarter the most beautiful uniformity? Do we not all, all wish for *salvation through him?* Understand me aright; I do not by any means intend to say, that the opinions, of all sects are indifferent, that one is just as true and as good as another. The modes in which men interpret the provisions of God through Christ, are evidently sometimes more and sometimes less consistent with scripture; and were I not sincerely convinced, that the system of *our* church is more conformable to scripture, than any other, and deserves on that account the preference, I should not dare to open my mouth among you. Yet I do not therefore deny that those, who agree with us on the essential point, belong to the flock of Jesus, and are the property of the good shepherd, who laid down his life for them also. Unity in faith on the Messiah whom God has sent, was one of the designs of Jesus.

But particularly, and above all, *Unity, in endeavours after holiness, and in brotherly love.* For here, my brethren, in this aspiration after perfect virtue, in this pure, all-embracing benevolence, lies the principal strength, which must preserve the flock of Jesus together. *Let him who names the name of Christ depart from unrighteousness.* There is then *one* end, for which all christians strive, to whatever party in other respects they may belong, the end of a true, godlike holiness and virtue. There is *one* spirit, which guides, strengthens, and animates them all in this pursuit, the spirit of God and of Christ. There is one and the same avenue to this end, which they must all adopt, the avenue of a genuine, well-grounded, never ceasing reformation. Let the differences in external polity be ever so wide, ever so striking; they vanish, as soon as your eye falls upon this essential, intrinsic point of perfection. *Here* all the true disciples of Jesus resemble each other; here they all feel themselves animated by

one and the same spirit; in this they all coincide, to be followers of Christ, and to be holy, as God is holy. And along with this, *the bond of brotherly love* encloses them. *The end of the commandment*, or of all christian instruction, *is*, as Paul says, *charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.* And John says, this is his commandment, that we believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another; *this is the word*, or message, he adds in another place, *which ye have heard from the beginning that we should love one another.* See here the gentle power, which amidst the vast variety of opinions, outward forms, creeds, and civil institutions, unites christians into one and the same body of Christ. He who is baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;—he, who with us, honours the Father, and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent, let him be dear to us as a brother; to him we owe toleration, respect, benevolence, let him belong to what sect he will, and cherish convictions which differ ever so widely from ours. God has not set us as judges over the faith of others; even when they err, we must not condemn them; to him alone are they accountable for their opinions; and these opinions must not destroy the union, peace, and benevolence, which charity commands. O! unity of the flock of Christ! how universal would be thy extension, what heart-felt admiration wouldst thou excite, if Christians would never forget, that men may be of very different opinions, and yet love each other; that it was the strife for holiness, that it was genuine, tender benevolence, by which Jesus designed that all his disciples should approach and be united one to another.

Add to this, *Unity in the hope of an eternal life with God*, and you have a full and perfect survey of the uniformity in religion which Jesus designed for the nations of the earth. The whole world was to learn, that man was not created for this short life, but for eternity; all nations were to raise their head, and to feel that they were immortal; taught by the Son of God, excited by the fact of his ascension to the Father, encouraged and filled with confidence by his mediation, all were to learn to regard, respect, value, and love each other as citizens of a better world, as creatures, precious, honourable, appointed to an everlasting destiny; the thought that hereafter *one* kingdom of God will receive them, and place them in the most blissful society, was to fill their hearts even here below with mutual tenderness and benevolence; thus knit together by their reverence for the father, by faith in his Son Jesus Christ, by the operation of his spirit in love, by the hope of an eternal life, they were to look forward in undisturbed peace to the coming of their Lord,

and sanctify, prepare, and mould themselves for that better world. What an elevated meaning to the words, *there shall be one flock and one shepherd!* What union without constraint! what order without shackles! what freedom without licentiousness! what boundless universal benefits from the gospel of Jesus, which, in all forms and opinions, among all parties and sects, was destined to extend light and strength, and improvement, and comfort, and to be enjoyed by every one in his own way, yet preserving in the main a happy uniformity! Let us beg God, my brethren, that he would suffer us continually to enter more and more into these depths of his wise councils. Let us incessantly implore him to remove the causes of that disunion and hatred, which still distracts his external church, and to accelerate that blissful period, when all christians shall *urgently strive to hold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace;* when they shall exclaim to one another in the true feeling of brotherhood, *one body, and one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over us all, and through us all, and in us all;* when those sweet words of union and of peace shall be entirely and in the most perfect sense fulfilled, *there shall be one flock and one shepherd;* Amen.

FROM THE UNITARIAN DEFENDANT.

ON THE PRACTICAL TENDENCY OF TRINITARIANISM.

RELIGION grows out of the relations subsisting between man and his Maker. The doctrines of religion are nothing else than the facts, which either reason has discovered, or God has revealed, concerning these relations; and the duties of religion are those observances, acknowledgments, and, in a somewhat looser sense, those dispositions of mind, which these relations demand. It is, therefore, of the last importance that these relations be correctly understood. An elementary error with regard to the relations of quantity, will not more infallibly conduct the mathematician to false conclusions, than an incorrect, or inadequate view of these relations will produce a corresponding effect on our religious views and feelings. Just conceptions of the object of our worship lie at the foundation of the religious character; and if the foundation be unsound, the superstructure must be insecure. We cannot worship 'in spirit and *truth*,' a Being whose *true* character we do not understand, and of whose dispositions and attributes we entertain false and perverted ideas. According to

the expressive language of the prophet, '*every man will walk in the name of his God.*' In so far as our religion operates on our characters, that is, in exact proportion as we *are* religious at all, we shall endeavour to cherish the dispositions, which, we think, will recommend us to the Being whose favour we seek; we shall engage in those services and performances, which we judge to be best adapted to secure his approbation, or avert his displeasure. Our views of his character, in short, will infuse their own spirit into our whole temper and conduct.

This reasoning is confirmed, if it can need confirmation, by the uniform testimony of history. The lightsome and joyous imagination of the Greeks peopled the regions of spiritual existences, with brilliant and gay creations. Their fabled gods were engaged, for the most part, in a round of light and festive enjoyments. Their most enviable prerogative and superiority to themselves, in the opinion of their votaries, seems to have been, their capacity of recurring, with inexhausted faculties, and unsated appetites, to those sportive or sensual indulgencies, in which they themselves placed the sum of human felicity. The religious rites of the Greeks, accordingly, partook largely of the same spirit. They were gay, pompous, and *jubilant;* grosssly licentious often; but neither cruel nor malignant. The Gods of our ancestors, in the north of Europe, on the contrary, were of a stern, gloomy, and vindictive nature; and such were the rites with which they were worshipped. In the remote and dreary recesses of primeval forests, impervious to the bright light of heaven, their altars smoked with the blood of *human* victims. The evidence derived from a consideration of the religious systems of the Hindoos, is of the same import. The monstrous productions of their lawless and impure fancies, are alike hateful for their cruelty, and disgusting for their obscenity; and their religious observances consist, in a great measure, of an unnatural combination of absurd penances, and insane self-inflictions, with the most extravagant and shocking licentiousness.

Between all these and the general decorum, purity and *intellectuality*, if we may use the term, which pervades the worship of Christians, how striking and instructive is the contrast, which presents itself. And to what is this difference to be attributed? A difference which has changed the whole face of Society, and constituted a new era in the history of human nature—a difference which is not to be traced in affairs of religion only; but which pervades the whole system of social intercourse, the whole mass of literature; and which is stamped, in short, on every production of man's moral and intellectual nature. We no longer inhabit the same *world* with those who lived two thousand years ago;

the very elements of our sphere seem to have undergone a change. And what mighty principle has operated to produce this change? *Christianity revealed a new object of worship.* One flash of its divine effulgence unpeopled at once the heights of Olympus, and the dark halls of Odin and Thor. By the light which it threw around the divine character, it restrained the wanderings of the imagination, and scattered the idle and visionary terrors, which had haunted the night of human ignorance and error. It gave clear, rational, and consistent representations of God, and carried up the thoughts of men with reverence and gratitude to the pure and perfect Father of their spirits, and Guardian and Benefactor of their days.

But powerful and salutary as the effects of this revelation have been, we believe they would have been still more so, had it been permitted to operate in its original simplicity and purity. Such, however, was not the case. In its progress through the world, which it was to fertilize and beautify, this sacred stream, unavoidably perhaps, became stained with the impurities of the soil through which it flowed. The God whom it revealed, was *One* simple, undivided, uncompounded essence; a pure, perfect and unchangeable spirit; the sole object of our worship, and supreme love—the single fountain of mercy, and source of hope to guilty men. The sublime simplicity of this fundamental doctrine was, however, soon corrupted by the mystical spirit of the oriental philosophy, with which many of the early converts to Christianity were deeply imbued. To this source, unquestionably, we are indebted for the vulgar doctrine of the Trinity, with the long train of absurd and pernicious consequences, which it has drawn after it.

Be this, however, as it may. Our present object is to inquire, not into the origin of the doctrine, but into the effects it is adapted to produce on the religious character and worship of those, who embrace it; and to compare these effects with those of Unitarianism. In the progress of this inquiry it will appear, if we mistake not, that the charge so often brought against the latter system, that it tends to render the sentiments of its votaries cold and indevout, is utterly without foundation.

We remark, then, in the first place, that the doctrine of a threefold distinction in the divine nature, in whatever phraseology it is expressed, does, of necessity, in proportion as it is believed and apprehended, introduce confusion into the mind of the worshipper, distract his attention, and thus render his devotions vacillating and feeble. We think this is, from the very nature of the human faculties, inevitable. Devotional feelings, like the rays of the sun, in order to the production of powerful effects,

must be fixed and concentrated. The heart will hardly kindle into a glow of grateful adoration, while the attention is fluctuating between different objects—call these objects by what name you please, it matters not—and the thoughts and recollection turned now to the claims of one, and now to those of another.

In religious and moral subjects, no less than material, to divide is to weaken. Our gratitude, reverence, love, and confidence cannot be, at the same time, equally and supremely placed on three distinct and independent objects. It is a solecism in terms. Yet, this is what the Trinitarian system requires of us. And we confess, we know not how it is possible for a conscientious and reflecting Trinitarian to address his petitions to Heaven without feeling himself embarrassed, and his devotions impeded by this difficulty. Besides, the offices and relations which the three persons in the Trinity sustain towards man, are so distinct and various, that it is not conceivable how the same feelings can be cherished towards each, or how they can, with propriety, be addressed in language of the same import. We cannot thank the Son for our existence, our faculties, or any of our natural advantages or enjoyments. We cannot thank the Father for redemption—it was *purchased* by the Son at the price of his blood; and to him alone in strict propriety of speech, our gratitude for this benefit is due. Nor can we with consistency, pray to the Father for the pardon of our sins; for according to the popular system of orthodoxy, he *never pardons* a single offence. His justice has received full and entire satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. In this case, to talk of pardon or forgiveness, is an abuse of language. A debt that has been fully paid cannot be forgiven; a discharge may be demanded as matter of *right*.

We ought not to pray to either the Father or the Son for the actual application of the blessings of the gospel to our hearts and consciences. For the kindlings of devout gratitude, and holy love; for the vigour of virtuous resolutions and high purposes, 'our strength to suffer, and our will to serve.'—for all this we are solely indebted to the third person in the Trinity; and to him alone should our petitions be addressed, and our acknowledgments offered. How is it possible, in perfect consistency with such a system as this, to worship God 'in spirit and in truth?' How is it possible, in our devotional services, to avoid continual hesitation, doubt, misgivings, and perplexity of mind? Is it not the case, in some instances at least, that a kind of insensible compromise is made in the mind of the worshipper; that his reverence and adoration are addressed to the Father, his love and gratitude

to the Son; while the Holy Spirit, as in some late defences of this scheme, is, in a great measure, overlooked and forgotten? From our own observations, as well as from the inherent probability of the case, it does appear to us, that the devotional exercises of those to whose minds the doctrine of the Trinity is any thing more than an inoperative form of words, are generally, and must be, confused, wavering and indistinct. They must want that unity and steadiness of feeling which is necessary to give fervour and strength to these sacred aspirations. Let any man, free from the bias of education and habit, peruse, for example, the litany of the Episcopal Church, and note the operations of his mind during the perusal. He will find, if we mistake not, that his attention is continually hovering in suspense between one object and another; distracted, and uncertain where to light;—while he finds one petition addressed to this person, another to that, and another to he knows not which. We instance in this service, the rather, on account of the peculiar beauty and pathos of the language, than which nothing can be more admirable or touching. Yet, its effect is marred, and in a great measure lost—on reflecting worshippers at least—on account of this want of singleness in its object. It is impossible to witness the devotions of those who use this collection of forms without calling to mind the language of our Saviour '*Ye worship ye know not what.*'

Our second objection to this doctrine, is, that its practical tendency is to reduce and degrade the principal object of worship to the standard of *mere humanity*. On this point we wish to be distinctly understood. We suppose no person can have attended the religious services, or read the religious books of Trinitarians without observing how large a portion of their prayers and ascriptions is addressed to Jesus Christ. He seems, indeed, in many instances, to be, almost exclusively, the object of devout gratitude and love. And under what character do the minds of these worshippers seem habitually to represent him? With what attributes do they invest him? It is impossible to hesitate in answering these questions: they are those that appertain to his human nature. 'Tis his human feeling, his sympathy with human sufferings, his compassion for human weakness, which fill the contemplation of the penitent, and draw them towards him for shelter and support. The object of their worship, the source of their hope and consolation is, in fact, none other than a *deified man*. For the proof and illustration of our position we refer again to the Litany. What are the attributes and circumstances, by which the Second Person of the Trinity is there invoked? Do the supplicants address themselves to the essential

benignity of the supreme and eternal spirit? Do they rest their hopes and confidence on the infinite kindness, the paternal pity of the Father of their spirits? Oh no. Hear the language in which they call on *him*, whom they regard as the object of supreme adoration. 'By thine agony, and bloody sweat; by thy cross and passion; by thy precious death and burial, &c.' If this be not to worship the creature and not the creator, then we know not the meaning of language. Every idea, to which the mind of the worshipper is here directed, every association which is awakened, is of weak, suffering, dying humanity. Is not this to transfer to another the glory which God vindicates to himself? If it be not, then we know of nothing that can be so denominated, short of the downright sottishness of idol worship. We profess ourselves unable to discern any essential difference between the spirit of the above invocations, and those addressed by the Romanists to the Virgin Mary. To us, the impropriety appears gross, palpable, shocking; repugnant to all pure and elevated devotional feeling, and necessarily productive of low, unworthy and debasing thoughts of the Divinity. Let us not, however, be misunderstood. We are far from charging upon all those who employ these forms of expression, or others equivalent to them, an intentional, or even *conscious* degradation of the object of their worship. It is not for us to sit in judgment on the consciences of our brethren. To their, and our Master they stand or fall. We speak only of the tendency of their system of opinions; and with regard to this, we are confident that we cannot be mistaken. We think it utterly impossible that it should be other than what we have pointed out.

Neither do we refer to the forms of the Episcopal Church because we think them in any peculiar degree liable to the objections we are urging; but principally because, being definite and permanent, they furnish a more distinct and convenient topic of reference than the varying and fleeting forms of extemporary devotion.

But perhaps the most striking illustration of the practical tendency of this doctrine is to be found in the devotional poetry composed under its influence. We will not speak of such rhapsodists, either in poetry, or prose, as Mrs. Rowe, or Hervey; but we may refer to such *men*, and such *writers* as Watts, and Doddridge, men of whose piety and moral worth it is not easy to speak or to think too highly. Yet of the hymns and sacred songs; of the former especially, it is not too much to say, that to a man of sound judgment, whose moral taste has not been perverted by his religious system; they are, many of them, absolutely disgusting. Change the name of the person addressed, and they become

mere *amatory poems*, and of a character, too, that would not be suffered to be sung in modest company. Some allowance, doubtless, ought to be made for the change that has taken place, since the time of Dr. Watts, in the habits and language of society. We presume there are few *Trinitarians*, at the present day, who would write devotional poetry exactly in the style, of which we are speaking. We do not, therefore, attribute the character of these productions *entirely* to the circumstance that their author was a Trinitarian. But of this we are sure, that by none but a Trinitarian could they *ever* have been written. And what is more to our purpose, these very productions, with all their offensive grossness, and thinly veiled voluptuousness, do, at this time, in most Trinitarian churches in our country, form the vehicle, by which their gratitude and praise and contrition and joy are addressed to Heaven.

Mankind in all ages, have manifested a proneness to bring down the objects of their worship to the standard of their own characters. The gods of the Heathens, except in the attributes of power and immortality, differed not from men. Our objection against the Trinitarian scheme is, that it furnishes scope for the exercise of this propensity, and under the guise, too, of superior piety. Sprung, as we verily believe, from the bosom of heathenism, it is not strange that it should retain some savour of its origin. It is not strange that it should insensibly, yet certainly, accustom its votaries to regard the object of their adoration as '*altogether such an one as*' themselves. That it has this tendency, we think is apparent, not only from an abstract consideration of its nature, but from the observation of acknowledged facts.

Again, we object to this doctrine, that by setting up these unscriptural distinctions in the mode of the divine existence, it inevitably tends to represent the character of the Eternal Father in a false and revolting light. In the exhibitions which it makes, or *causes to be made*, of the plan and work of redemption, it introduces the God and Father of all in the character of a stern, inflexible, and *vindictive* judge, who would not be appeased while *justice* had any thing to demand; of a rigorous creditor, who would not loose his hold upon his victim till the last farthing was paid; as a wrathful and offended sovereign, so bent on *vengeance*—we use the very language of orthodoxy—as to be willing to inflict it even on the innocent. Of such representations the works of orthodox divines are full. They regard these ideas as essential to the truly Christian character. They tell you that the system of faith and experience, which is not built upon them, is spurious, or inadequate.

Surely, this is not the light which the gospel sheds on the cha-

racter of God; nor these the attributes with which it invests him. Neither are these views consistent with what we learn from the analogy of his works, or our own experience of his providential care. But suppose they were so, we, for our part, see not how, or where, the foundations of religious or moral obligations could be laid. We see not how it would be possible to cherish toward such a being either love, gratitude, or reverence. We see no room for penitence, or contrition; nor any advantage in them if there were. '*A fearful looking for of judgment*,' or a reckless abandonment of hope and fear alike, would be all that remained for erring man. The doctrine in question, does, indeed, open a vista of hope for a chosen few; and on these, some obligations to gratitude and obedience may be considered to rest. But by what means is this brought to pass? By the intervention of the second person in the Trinity, who by his sufferings and death, has purchased of the inexorable Father the right to confer eternal life on those, who had been preordained to this from eternity. But this selection having been made without any reference to character or conduct, and the blessing actually conferred without regard to personal desert, it is difficult to conceive how any moral effect should be produced by it on the characters even of the favoured few. And as regards the rest, it is obvious, that no gratitude can be due from *them* to a Being, who has given them existence for the express purpose of rendering that existence a curse; nor any obedience due to laws, which they are made without capacity of obeying, and which it was never intended they should obey.

Such, readers, is, as we conscientiously believe, a fair view of the practical tendency of the doctrine in question. God forbid we should misrepresent or distort it. But for what purpose is this view of the doctrine exhibited? Simply to show that a doctrine pressed and encumbered with difficulties such as these, should, at least, be cautiously and deliberately examined, before it be admitted; to show that it requires to be sustained by strong, unequivocal, indubitable testimony; that it is not to be taken on trust, or drawn in by doubtful inferences; that, in short no rational man should embrace a dogma so sweeping in its consequences, without an express, '*thus saith the Lord.*'

We would show that Unitarians are not altogether inexcusable for hesitating on this point, and calling for clear and positive proofs; and that to doubt or reject it, is not to be taken as decisive evidence of a corrupt heart, or reprobate mind. We wish to make it appear, that in their case, there is room, at least, for charitable construction; and to believe that they may be upright,

though mistaken. If we shall have atchieved thus much, we shall not think that we have laboured to no purpose.

Our own system of opinions is charged with being cold and inoperative; with leaving the heart unaffected. Admitting the charge to be in any measure correct, it is obvious to reply, that it is better to be cold, than animated by a false and unhallowed fire; it is better that the affections be unmoved, than perverted in their exercise, or drawn toward unworthy objects. We hold that the calm of indifference is a more desirable state than the ragings of tempestuous zeal, or the blind fury of intolerant fanaticism. In the absence of higher and nobler enjoyments, the mere quiet of life is of some value; and Unitarianism may, at least, plead in its own behalf, that its character is peaceable.

But the charge is wholly unfounded. Unitarianism is deficient in no principle, which is adapted to exert a healthful influence on the heart and conscience. It embraces every view, and recognizes every attribute of the divine character, which tends to enlarge, to elevate, and purify the affections; to inspire a salutary and filial fear, a devout reverence, an ingenuous sorrow for sin, and an animating hope of forgiveness—every thing to awaken love, and confidence, and gratitude, and joy.

If there be any thing kindly in the moral influence of the gospel; if there be any thing animating and attractive in the example of Jesus; if any light be shed over the dark path of life by the hope of immortality; if there be any consolation to the heart broken and crushed by calamity, in the persuasion that '*all things shall work together for good to those who love God*;' any thing ennobling and exalting in communion with the Father of our spirits; then is not Unitarianism destitute of topicks of spirit-stirring interest to enkindle the devotion of its adherents.

Why *should* Unitarians be less devout than other men? Is there any thing in the peculiar views of our opponents—in their three-fold division of the object of their worship—to render their devotional feelings more steady, and more intense than ours? We have seen that the very reverse is the truth. Is there anything in the association of human attributes and qualities with those of the divinity, in the being whom they address, to give a stronger impulse to the aspirations of piety? On the other hand, is it not true, that the more simple, the more distinct, the more lofty and consistent our views of the divine character are, the more corresponding qualities will be infused into our religious feelings and characters? Why should our love to God be less than that of Trinitarians? Their system represents him as stern and unforgiving; ours as *essentially* benignant and merciful. Why should our gratitude be less than theirs? Is existence less

a blessing, because our system teaches us that he, who made us, made us to be happy, and furnished us with the faculties and means both of enjoying and obtaining, and *securing* felicity. Is eternal life of less value because we believe it the *unpurchased* gift of our Father in Heaven? Are the sacred influences of the Holy Spirit, which give elevation to our thoughts, vigour and efficacy to our virtuous purposes, and a holy fervour to our devotions; which shed light and consolation into our hearts amidst the darkest scenes of life, and nerve our spirits to endurance when buffetted by calamity—are these less desirable, because we believe they proceed directly from the One living and true God, without the agency of a third distinct personal subsistence? Ought the solemn sanctions of the gospel to bear with less weight upon our consciences, because we believe that *God* '*will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained*,' than if we looked for the *second* person of the Trinity for our Judge? We want no other evidence of the danger of transgression than the assurance of the divine word; nor any broader and firmer foundation for our eternal hopes, than the promise of the God of truth. If fear and hope; if love, and gratitude, and reverence may be expected to influence the characters of rational and moral beings, then, we repeat, our system is not deficient in the means and motives to produce a pious temper, and a holy life.

H.

RETREAT FOR THE INTEMPERATE.

Among all the projects devised in this age, when plans having for their object the good of mankind, have been prosecuted with a zeal and ardour, usually devoted only to those whose end is private interest, I believe that no one has yet been presented whose purpose is the reformation or the seclusion of individuals addicted to the crime of intemperance. We have not been without those who have laboured to impress upon society a sense of the extent to which it is spreading, and the evils which it is entailing upon us. These have been stated fully, forcibly, and frequently. We have had too, enough of exhortation and admonition and reproof. The motives for amendment have been insisted upon, again and again. The drunkard has been told of the destiny that awaits him, till he has become callous to the horror which it might once have excited. He has been warned of the contempt of man and the anger of God that are his certain portion; of the misery unutterable and unavoidable which must cling to him both here and hereafter; of the diseases that are

fastening upon him, of the death to which he is hastening; till the voice that speaks to him passes by, like the idle wind, unheard or disregarded. This does not seem to be sufficient. Intemperance is a vice which takes too fast hold to be removed by such means. They are applied to the offenders in a mass, and have little effect on individuals. Is there no way by which we can make personal application of a remedy, and thus effect reformation in particular cases, or at least arrest the evil before it has become fixed and irremediable?

There are individual instances of this vice, in which a reformation becomes of more than ordinary importance. And this, both as it respects the happiness of the person himself and his family or friends, and also the influence of his example; its influence on the one hand, to encourage others in the course of indulgence which he is pursuing; its influence on the other hand, to exhibit a proof of the possibility and practicability of reformation. For this purpose no plan seems adequate but that of providing an asylum whither the intemperate can be made to retire, and subjected to the necessary measures of restraint, during the painful period of amendment. No method has been devised so successful, in the cure of the insane, as institutions of this nature, where the subject of the disease may be secluded from the world, be protected from the operation of those causes which have produced, or may perpetuate his malady, and thus gradually regain the tone of his mental powers, the undisturbed possession of his reason. Now what insanity is there more complete than that of the drunkard? What lunatic who conducts himself more lamentably opposite to the dictates of sound judgment? Whose reason is so completely prostrated before an overwhelming delusion? Who requires so much to be removed by force from the causes which produce and perpetuate his delirium—for who is so little able to resist and withstand their operation himself? No tenant of Bedlam is ever more completely destitute of the power of self controul and self restraint; is ever more incapable of standing between himself and the sources of his own weakness, than the intemperate man.

Were there such a resource as this, there are thousands who would desire to fly to it of their own accord—who would consider it as the greatest blessing that could be afforded them on earth. Those who are in the habit of observing the intemperate, must be aware, that there is not always that entire absence of moral sensibility which would seem to be indicated by the unrestrained manner in which they yield themselves up to indulgence. That they often feel the debasing nature of their propensities, although they cannot resist them. In fact the animal nature of

man is often given over to destruction, before the spiritual has become alarmed. A physical necessity for the indulgence has become established, which the moral power cannot counteract, even when it has become fully sensible of the danger. They are awake to the full evil of their situation, but are far too weak to extricate themselves. They sob, and weep, and sometimes dare to pray ; but do not reform. They resolve and re-resolve, in their hours of sobriety and reflection ; but a moment's temptation roots up resolution after resolution, and as each resolve is broken, the moral principle on which it was founded, becomes proportionably weaker. It is in this situation that coercive power might step in and save. A power to which the drunkard would, in many cases, most readily and thankfully surrender himself, as alone able to save him from utter destruction.

In such a plan as this which has been suggested—and which some may deem so romantic, as to approach the ridiculous—the principal object must of course be, to exercise such a degree of restraint as shall effectually and constantly debar its subjects from any access to the means of indulgence. This need not be more severe than that exercised upon the tenants of lunatic asylums, nor deprive them of any of the comforts or even the luxuries of life. But with this restraint, other objects of very great importance might be combined, which should at once promote the delivery of the individual from his baneful habit and elevate and improve his general character, and strengthen his moral and religious principles.

In the intemperate man, the better parts of his nature, do not, if I may so express it, always have fair play. So much is his body disordered, so much is his brain confused, by the succession of his trespasses, that he has not in the interval between them, an opportunity for the unclouded exercise of his reason. The motives for reformation to be derived from moral and religious considerations, from a sense of character, from a regard to worldly interest and prosperity, to the happiness of his friends, his wife and family, have not time to operate effectually in the short intervals which he allows himself. They cannot change him in a moment, and the impression they are sometimes perhaps beginning to make, is eradicated by each succeeding instance of transgression. But in the state of tranquillity and reflection which must be produced by the plan of seclusion, all these motives might be urged to great advantage, and often no doubt with complete success. Religion would assert her claims—moral feeling would come powerfully to her aid—the respect due to human society would exercise its influence—the ties of nature would be again regarded—and the best affections of the heart, unite with

motives derived from the highest and noblest sources to bring back the criminal to repentance.

Individuals addicted to the vice of intemperance, in attempting the work of their own reformation, do not stand upon equal ground with those who have transgressed in any other way. With regard to most vicious habits, the temptation to indulge in them is occasional, it attacks at distinct periods, after certain intervals, and requires for its resistance repeated but single efforts. Strong efforts no doubt and difficult to make, but still only occasional. On the other hand, the temptation of the drunkard arises, not from the accidental suggestion of the means of indulgence, not from the occurrence of a favourable opportunity, not from the excitement, at particular times and seasons, of the desire of gratifying his palate with the taste of liquor, but from a deeper cause and a cause which is always operating. It consists in a physical necessity for constant stimulus which has been created by a continual indulgence—a craving and gnawing appetite which can only be appeased by liquor, and which if not so appeased creates feelings of despondency and desperation that make existence itself a burden. Deprived of this stimulus, the drunkard is the most miserable and pitiable of mortals. His nerves are unstrung, his fibres have lost their tone, his spirits flag, and all elasticity, whether of mind or body, is completely lost. His system, so long used to depend upon artificial excitement for its tone, its capability of action, sinks so soon as it is withdrawn; as a steed always accustomed to be driven with whip and spur, falters at once in his pace if they cease to be applied.

Now in the drunkard this animal sensation is constantly present. It is not an affection of the mind, but of the body; it is not therefore subject to mental exertion like the propensities to other crimes. but continues its influence in spite of it. When the votary of a different vice has overcome a temptation that assailed him, he is relieved at once; he is made happy by the success of the effort, he feels, that he is a better man, that he has taken one step towards virtue; but the intemperate man has none of this encouragement. His temptation does not proceed so much from moral obliquity, as from a physical want, and this is always present. He is dispirited and heartless. Though he exerts himself to the utmost and religiously resists every opportunity of indulgence; the effort brings with it no relief to that feeling which constitutes his principal danger. The same wearing, sinking sensation still remains, which only one thing can alleviate, and that but for a moment.

The resolution then required to enable a man to correct a habit of intemperance, is different in its nature, from that which

is required in most other cases. It must be constantly, equally, and powerfully under exercise. It must be always screwed up to the highest pitch; and that not only because the temptation is always present, but because the means of indulgence are ordinarily so also; it is seldom when the disposition exists that the means cannot be found. Any moment of weakness, therefore, may be the ruin of the drunkard, who is attempting reformation; but not so with offenders of other kinds. With them the moment of weakness, of irresolution, of flagging resistance, may occur, but without opportunity; or the opportunity may occur, and find the mind firm and steady in resistance. The two circumstances must fall together to make the wreck certain. But with the drunkard the moment of weakness, come when it will, always finds the means ready and at hand.

It arises from this circumstance, I conceive, that we so seldom hear of those who have successfully attempted to reform from habits of intemperance; that instances of recovery from this are so much more rare than those from any other vice. And having thus pointed out the cause of the greater difficulty attending the effort in this case, the remedy must be sought for in something which shall protect against the consequences of the occasional weakness, which so often prostrates the best hopes of reformation. This remedy cannot be found in any internal principle of resistance; this can seldom, very seldom be depended upon as permanent; it must be sought for in some external precautions, which by constantly operating, shall guard against the danger at every avenue where it may threaten.

This would be the purpose of a Retreat for the Intemperate. The subjects of it should never be left entirely to themselves; they should always be under a certain degree of controul, but this controul limited to one particular; in every other respect, they should be free to act and live as they pleased. So far as the appetite is concerned, they ought to be brought within certain rules of the most rigid temperance; and those rules be most inviolably enforced. The advantages of this plan would be, first, to prevent the opportunities of indulgence, and thus forcibly secure a continued abstinence; and secondly, as a consequence of this abstinence, effect the gradual removal of that state of the animal system upon which the strong propensity of drunkards depends.

This would necessarily be a work of time, and an entire reformation would after all require a good deal of voluntary exertion, a long continued caution and watchfulness, after the subject was released from the immediate constraint of the retreat. But by means of this seclusion the grand difficulty would have been

overcome, the chain of bad habits would have been broken, and a man would mingle with the world again under great advantages for continued good behaviour. The effort of resistance would become every day comparatively easier. He would feel some of the happiness and satisfaction of virtuous resolution. His temptation instead of being constant, would be only occasional, like that to other vices. He would not carry it hanging round him, like a curse to every moment of his existence.

How many are there around us, and among us, to whom such a method of treatment might be the means of saving from utter and irretrievable ruin. How many, whose characters, before their indulgence in this one fatal vice, possessed much that was good and estimable and might again be brought back and made worthy members of society. How many, whose rank and standing now give, in some degree, a sanction to the vice in which they indulge, might be thus brought to exert as great an influence in the cause of virtue, by the example of their reformation. This plan could of course extend to but few in number, and would only be successful in those, who in addition to the means of seclusion and restraint are possessed of a considerable share of resolution. But these few would be of a class whose bad example is most pernicious, and whose reformation when it occurs has the most effectual and beneficial influence.

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

HERESY OF THE COPERNICAN SYSTEM.

The following curious notice is contained in a late German journal (Algemeines Repertorium, Leipzig, 1820, B. i. § 396.)

'At Rome, permission to print Professor Settele's Course of Astronomy has been denied, because it directly teaches the Copernican System, and does not merely assume it as a hypothesis; as was permitted by a bull of Benedict XIV. [Benedict XIV. was chosen Pope in 1740.] The high Censor at Rome is the master of the sacred palace, now P. Anfossi. A decision on the subject is now expected from the Congregation of the Holy Office and of the Index.'

We doubt whether many of our readers were aware how slowly the Copernican System had made its way in the world.

A QUESTIONABLE SERMON.

James the First, on hearing a sermon, in which there was more of politics than religion, asked Bishop Andrews what he

thought of it, and whether it were a sermon or not. 'Please your Majesty,' replied the bishop, 'by very charitable construction it may pass for a sermon.'

Steward's Anecdotes, vol. iii. p. 257.

CORRECTIONS OF MRS. BARBAULD'S THOUGHT ON DEATH.

We have seen a corrected copy of this beautiful little poem, furnished by the authoress for the [English] Monthly Repository, in the number for November last. There are some variations from that which appeared in the Disciple, vol. iii. p. 440.

Line 1, for,

When life *in* opening buds is sweet

Read

When life, *as* opening buds, is sweet.

Line 5. For 'borrowed' read 'valued.' And transpose the two concluding stanzas. We confess we hardly think this last change an improvement.

Every Christian will feel the simplicity and piety of the following hymn; though he may not be able to adopt all its language as his own.

AN EVENING HYMN.

By Bishop Kenn.

Glory to thee, my God! this night,
For all the blessings of the light;
Keep me, O keep me, King of Kings,
Under thy own Almighty wings.

Forgive me Lord! for thy dear Son,
The ills that I this day have done;
That with the world, myself and thee,
I, ere I sleep, at peace may be.

Teach me to live, that I may dread
The grave, as little as my bed;
Teach me to die, that so I may
With joy behold the judgment day.

O may my soul on thee repose;
And may sweet sleep my eyelid close,
Sleep that may me more active make,
To serve my God, when I awake.

When restless, in the night, I lie,
My soul with heavenly thoughts supply;
Let no ill dreams disturb my rest;
No powers of darkness me molest.

Let my blest Guardian, while I sleep,
His watchful station near me keep,
My heart with love celestial fill,
And guard me from the approach of ill.

Lord! let my soul forever share,
The bliss of thy paternal care;
'Tis heaven on earth, 'tis heaven above,
To see thy face, to sing thy love.

Should death itself my sleep invade,
Why should I be of death afraid?
Protected by thy powerful arm,
Though he may strike, he cannot harm.

For death is life, and labour rest,
If with thy gracious presence blest;
Then welcome sleep or death to me,
I'm still secure, for still with thee.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him, all creatures here below,
Praise him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

EPITAPH ON MR. THACHER.

The following epitaph on the late lamented Mr. Thacher, has not, we believe, been before published. It is inscribed on his monument at Moulines.

Memoriæ Sacrum
Reverendi Samuelis Cooper Thacher,
In Novanglia, apud Bostonienses, olim Christi ecclesiæ ministri;
Qui officiis ejus sacris dum sedulo fungeretur,
Quid verum atque honestum eloquentiâ et silentio docuit:
Miti sapientiâ, moribus suavissimis, caritate erga omnes,
Ingenio disciplinis exculto,
Omni virtute, quæ gratiam aut auctoritatem conciliaret,
Præstans.
Lentâ tabe oppressus, valetudinis causâ, a patriâ discessit:
Ecclesiâ cujus minister fuit omne amoris officium persolvente:
Sed duos annos per mare et terras jactatus,
In hac urbe demum hospes, animum Deo placide reddidit;
Longam memoriam, et grave desiderium sui apud bonos relinquens.
Natus Bostoniæ Novanglorum Decembris die XIV. A. D. N.
MDCCLXXXV.
Obiit Januarii die II. A. D. N. MDCCCXVIII.
Fratres et soror ejus moerentes H. M. P.

REVIEW.

ARTICLE VI.

Prometheus, Part II. with other Poems. By James G. Percival. New Haven, 1822. pp. 108.

We do not know that there are many things of greater importance to a reading community, than the character of its authors. Even literary taste partakes something of a moral nature, when it is considered how far a right or a false taste in books, may go to form and modify the whole habit of thinking and feeling throughout a community. We are accustomed, therefore, to cast a watchful eye upon the works which are sent out from our presses, and to hope or fear for the cause of morality and religion, according to the character of the books which are favourites with the people.

We have watched the course of no author with more anxiety than that of Mr. Percival. He is a young man, but has opened a poetical career uncommonly rapid and promising. He has published so much and so frequently as to be universally known, and with so much genuine genius, as to have drawn to himself no small portion of flattering attention. We have been among those who have looked on with an eager and uneasy interest; believing him to possess those rare gifts of intellect and fancy, which render him capable of taking a high place among our authors; yet fearful that the indications he has given of impatience and a certain waywardness of fancy and taste, might prevent his permanent success;—while at the same time, we could not fail to be alarmed at the very equivocal language he has seen fit to use in his allusions to revealed religion and a future state. We have hoped from the beautiful strains of moral feeling and elevated sentiment, which pervade some portions of his works, that the cause of virtue would find in him a powerful advocate; but the darkness and doubts which hang over other passages, have made us fear that he would prove the ally of infidelity and misanthropy. How far his admiration of Byron,—whom in passages he resembles, and in some hardly less than equals,—may have unwittingly beguiled him into this style, more for the sake of the poetry and the declamation, than from

serious conviction and set purpose to injure, we cannot pretend to say. We charitably hope that this may be the true solution of those consistencies of moral sentiment and speculation with which his writings abound; and that he will not long suffer these, or any of his other faults, to stand in the way of that permanent reputation, to which he is entitled by the endowments of his nature.

When we say this, we speak both in a literary and a moral point of view. And such are the feelings with which we have been accustomed to contemplate the possible excellence and fame of this writer, and the obstacles which he is himself throwing in their way; that we propose to devote a few pages to a more than usually diligent examination of his last volume. In doing this, some may regard us as departing from our proper province. But if it be in some measure a departure, yet such is the reciprocal influence of letters and morals, and such the interest which a religious community must necessarily take in the character of all its popular authors, and such the importance that our popular literature should be, from the first, chaste and correct, critically as well as morally; that we are persuaded we shall be readily excused; and instead of deviating from our duty, shall be only thought to pursue it by another path.

The work before us is a second part of the desultory, unconnected, unequal, but spirited poem of Prometheus. It is without a subject, and seems to have neither beginning, middle, nor end. We are told in the preface, that it is 'not entirely destitute of a plan to those who are able to detect it;' but as we are unable to do this, it has no plan for us. The author, however, derives an advantage from this discursive method, in the great variety of constantly shifting topics which he may introduce, and the scope which is thus given to all the fertility and flexibility of his genius. But it injures the interest of the whole, or rather takes away all its interest as a single poem, and leaves no attraction to the reader, except what may be found in detached passages. For this reason it must be read in scraps; and for another besides—that the perusal demands an effort and severity of attention, which soon fatigues. It is rather characteristic of Mr. Percival's poetry, that it requires to be studied. Many passages must be read repeatedly before their beauty or their meaning become apparent; and some remain covered in misty obscurity after every effort to understand them. This is a fault. But there is for the most part an affluence of diction, an harmonious flow of verse, a rich variety of imagery, and a felicity in the description of the scenes and objects of nature, which unequivocally de-

clare the power of the writer, even when they fail of being attractive to the reader.

A principal cause of the hard reading and obscurity at which we have hinted, we suppose to be the extreme haste with which the author writes. When this is considered, all his faults and failures are accounted for, and it is perhaps matter of surprise, that they are not greater and more numerous. It is still more serious matter of surprise, that any man will hazard his reputation and success by such impromptu publications. The present poem, we are told, 'was written hastily in a very few days.' Against such wanton rapidity we think it the duty of every friend of letters and genius seriously to protest. For what is to be gained of honest fame to an author, or of valuable acquisition to our literature, by such hasty throwing off of crude and indigested thought? Who can expect to find any thing like completeness, or continued and sustained merit, in a poem of two thousand lines, which is made in a few days and sent uncorrected to the press? It can be little more than a melancholy testimony, that the writer might do well if he would. For allowing, what is undoubtedly true, that the finest productions of the pen are oftentimes thrown off as the author of Waverley says of his own, without care or preparation, by the spontaneous effort of an excited mind; yet no man's mind is capable of operating thus through a number of days successively, and making a long poem so felicitously, that it shall need no revision. Those are rare moments, seasons of occasional inspiration, 'like angel visits few and far between.' He imposes upon himself who believes that he is always in this frame, or that what he writes at such a time is all good and accurate, 'foaming up with the spirit of life, and glowing with the rainbows of a glad inspiration.' Even the champaign wine, from which our author draws this illustration, may be very poor stuff notwithstanding its rainbows and foam.

It is the fundamental and ruinous error of this writer to act on this principle of temporary inspiration, and to despise the excellence which comes from care and correction:—an error, which forebodes the disappointment of the high expectations he has raised, and the destruction, in the bud, of that reputation on which our country has already begun to pride itself. The deliberateness with which this is done is truly mortifying. The preface to this volume is wholly occupied in defending this sad mistake: smartly, and wittily, but not satisfactorily. There is little of sober argument, and a great deal of far fetched analogy and flippant remark, which is wide of the real question, and can serve only to divert attention from the actual merits of the case. Let us follow him in this course a little way.

'This has been,' he says, 'a standing law of sober criticism for two thousand years—Write much, if you please, but keep it long and prune it well. I must confess I do not relish this mode of writing by the rule of subtraction. I had rather publish what was thrown out hastily from my mind, than reduce it by laboured correction, from forty to four. I do not like that poetry which bears the marks of the file and burnisher.'

This is merely stating that his own inclination is opposed to the experience of two thousand years:—a pretty convincing proof, one would think, that his inclination is wrong. It is not always a good argument against a thing that we 'do not relish it.' It may be excellent in itself notwithstanding; and what has been found salutary for so long a period, it is hardly wise to discard because the stomach revolts at it a little at first. As to the file and burnisher, the more and the more skilfully they are used, the less are the marks of them visible. No person has used them more fastidiously than Rousseau, and none has given his writings more entirely the air of fervour and inspiration. No man ever laboured and pruned and corrected his composition more than Demosthenes; yet there is no lack in his orations of ardour and energy. The smart application of 'the rule of subtraction,' does not alter the sober fact, that almost every man writes something in his first draft, which were better blotted than retained.

'I like to see it in the full ebullition of feeling and fancy, foaming up with the spirit of life, and glowing with the rainbows of a glad inspiration. It would be a mournful task to distil off the *vivida vis*, that comes out only in the moments of happy excitement, and reduce the living materials to a *caput mortuum* of chaste and sober reason. When there is a quick swell of passion, and an ever coming and going of beauty, as the light of the soul glances over it, I could not have the heart to press it down to its solid quintessence. This would do, if poetry was meant to be a string of proverbs, moving on, in the rank and file of couplets, with the regular slow-step of a Prussian army. But I like to see something savage and luxuriant in works of imagination, throwing itself out like the wild vines of the forest, rambling and climbing over the branches, and twining themselves into a maze of windings. What would you think of a fine horse, if you saw him always on the *curvet* and the *demivolte?* Would he not seem a grander object, if, after gathering his strength on the bit, he should burst out, and sweep over the plain in the full force of his speed; or, as Homer finely expresses it, (I give my own English), "Like a full-fed horse, who breaks his band, and runs prancing through the plain, to where he loved to bathe in the fair flowing river; exulting he holds his head aloft, and his mane tosses around his shoulders."'

We cannot believe that Mr. Percival imagined there is any reasoning in all this array of figures. It appears to us like the

attempt of a wilful man to disguise from himself what he knows to be wrong, but what he is determined to persist in, and to persuade others to be right. We cannot marshal arguments for the overthrow of these images. We will only ask, whether it is intended to be implied, that there is any hostility or incompatibility between poetry and *chaste and sober reason?* If there be not, there is no force in what is said. If there be, then poetry is good for nothing, and the more carelessly written the better, because the sooner it will perish. We ask also, if it is ever supposed that vines are injured by being pruned? Or if a man would choose to have his horse always 'gather his strength on the bit, and sweep over the plain in the full force of his speed?' If this be the mode in which Mr. Percival chooses to ride Pegasus, he must not be surprized to find that his readers are left behind, and that none at last will ride with him—nay, that he himself is thrown. Sober men would choose to have the animal under control, and to adapt his paces to the purpose of the journey; no more desiring to be run away with by 'a full fed horse who has broken his band,' than to be 'always on the curvet and the demivolte.'

As far as we can gather the intention of this paragraph of figurative argumentation, our author does not perceive, certainly does not allow, that there is any alternative to a writer, but to leave every thing just as it comes fresh from his pen, or to make it stupid and dull, by attempts to correct it. He must either print all that he writes, or annihilate thirty-six lines in every forty, and leave the remaining four nothing but a caput mortuum of poor prose. He must either have a thick forest of vine branches and mazes, whether they can be seen through and got through or not; or else must leave a dead uniform barren level of sand. We hope that he is not quite so perverse as all this would seem to imply.

In what follows there is something more plausible.

'Again, I contend that this free and careless style is the natural one of a dawning national literature. The public does not then reward authors sufficiently, to warrant them in giving months and even years to the perfecting a few hundred lines. They cannot then afford to write and rewrite, muse and revolve, blot and interline, till they have made all as smooth, but as tame, as if poetry was only meant to show how softly our language can flow onward, and how carefully the fancy can obey the severest laws of the judgment. Authors, here, cannot afford to trim the lamp much. If they would live by their pens, they must write by the job, and take long ones too. They cannot afford to exhibit such a multitude of *variæ lectiones* as Pope could. What comes out first must go abroad, and meet its fate. We should here write in prose, and write on busi-

ness too, unless we could contrive some way to inspire wealth with genius, and make those, who have nothing to do but amuse themselves, willing to seek the noblest amusement, the revels of the soul.'

There is undoubtedly much truth in these remarks, but we think they support a different conclusion from that drawn by the author;—not, that the circumstances of the country require a man to publish a large quantity of undigested rhyme, but that they render it expedient for him, so far as a living is concerned, not to publish rhyme at all. For we suppose that if he cannot stay to make it good, no quantity will meet such a market as to give him a livelihood. Poetical *jobs*, however *long* they may be, will be far less gainful than some other more substantial and worldly jobs, and he who writes for a living, had best take up his pen only for prose and business. Otherwise, there is no course but to imitate Plautus, who 'had two trades, was a poet for his diversion, and helped to turn a mill in order to gain a livelihood.' There is also, we think, an historical inaccuracy in the supposition that it was their *reward*, which enabled other poets to spend time in perfecting their works. On the contrary, they have been for the most part notoriously destitute of reward, performing their toils beneath the application of a far different stimulus. Those who have received the largest remuneration, have by no means been most remarkable for spending 'months and years in perfecting a few hundred lines.'

There is another supposition in this paragraph equally unfounded; that is, that careful revision necessarily results in tameness; and it is insinuated though not asserted, that it has been so in fact. Now there is undoubtedly a mean to be observed, and force and sense are never to be sacrificed to the harmony of sounds. But certainly carelessness, harshness, obscurity, and grammatical inaccuracies are not necessary to sense and force; and these are the very evils of hasty composition, which a revision is to remedy. Certainly also, the retrenching of redundancies, and the substitution of happier epithets or more perfect rhymes, than sometimes occur at first, do not imply that the work must thus become insipid.

'But,' continues Mr. P. 'our correctest poets are not our greatest. (We say *ours*, when we talk of England.) The master spirits, who rise, like the *Dii majores*, above the herd of the correct, the polished, the decent, and the pretty, have never been too lavish of their corrections, and yet their fame will live longest. Is not Chaucer one of the most immortal of our poets? He has certainly been the longest lived, and has now all the freshness of a green old age. But he wrote much, very much indeed, and one would think very rapidly and negligently; yet his readers love him

none the less for that. Did Shakespeare and Spencer correct much? I trow not."

Here again is a total want of discrimination, every thing in the extreme. Our author speaks as if it were to the prejudice of a poet to be 'correct and polished,' and as if it were impossible to revise and correct without being 'too lavish of corrections.' There is no force in such remarks. As for the three examples brought forward, it may or may not be true that they were scrupulous in revision. The assumption that they were not is perfectly gratuitous, for the imperfections of their works may be owing to other causes than want of care. Allowing that they were not, those 'master spirits' are no examples for other men; and no one should avail himself of their authority until he feels conscious of possessing equal power with them to triumph in spite of disadvantages.—And after all, we must not keep out of sight the sober truth, that even the works of these men would be the better for correction, and that their defects are perpetual cause of lamentation.

'Even Milton seems often to have left his finest passages as they came fresh from the overflowing riches of his mind; at least one would think he did not blot much, when he sent cowls and hoods, beads and reliques, flying over the back side of the world into limbo.'

That is to say, he did not blot this passage; it affords no presumption however, that he wrote without revision. What is said of some of his finest passages is unquestionably true, as it is, we suppose, of every fine writer; but it is far from proving the converse to be true,—that every passage which comes fresh from the overflowing mind, is *therefore* one of the finest passages.

'Some, too, cannot endure any other way of writing but the rapid. They are as impatient of the *labor limæ*, as a convict of a treading mill. They love only what comes out in some rare moment of gladness, like a full stream of bright fancies; or if they take to a darker mood, they can only be satisfied with the outpourings of a bursting heart. These must write rapidly, and only two things can check them,—the heart-sinking, which is their so common inheritance, and the *medusean* frown of the public, which will finally harden every thing to stone. If both are united in one, there is much danger that petrifaction will follow.'

This is returning to what the preface began with—an acknowledgment that disinclination, impatience of the labour, is the real cause of this haste. Every thing else which has been brought forward, is a faint attempt to cover and apologize for this disinclination; a pretence to justify what on the face of it is unjustifiable. We are mortified to find an accomplished scholar striving thus

to shield his weakness, and wasting his ingenuity in the invention of arguments to prove a necessity for leaving his works incomplete, and thus doing the most to defeat his own prospects of eminence and honour.

If we now look at the poem which was written in pursuance of this doctrine, and which the preface we have examined is designed to defend; we shall find it just what we might expect: sparkling with brilliant images, interspersed with beautiful descriptions, musical in the structure of the verse, and bearing marks throughout of the vigorous touches of a rich and lavish hand; but also spotted every where with the defects of an extemporaneous production—incomplete, unfinished, without proportion of parts, and without neatness in the details; sometimes crude in its conceptions, sometimes confused in its descriptions, sometimes inconsistent in its imagery, and sometimes inaccurate in its grammar. If it had been poured upon your ear just as it is, in the enthusiastic declamation of a skilful improvisatore, you would think it a wonderful exhibition, and would pass without notice the deformities we have named, as the unavoidable accompaniments of a spontaneous composition. But in a written and published poem, they become painful. If you stop to remember that it is the production of 'only a few days,' and therefore to be regarded as in some sense extemporaneous; you might think that indeed it is a remarkable work, but you could not extend to it the delighted allowance you give to an extemporaneous speech; and you would be likely to be displeased that one should think it worth while to intrude upon the world the hasty effusions of his unpremeditated composition. It is impossible but that those inaccuracies, which pass unnoticed in the excitement of speaking, should be unpardonably offensive when seen upon paper in the coolness of retirement. This is so well understood, that no orator at the bar or in the senate, who values his reputation, will suffer the report of his speech to be given to the public, until it has undergone a leisurely correction. Is it possible that the opposite experiment should succeed in poetry? This is one of the highest and most perfect of arts. It demands excellence of various kinds—not only of thought, sentiment, passion, imagery, but of language; so essential indeed is an exact and exquisite diction, that no vigour of thought or fervour of passion will give a poet the highest place, except accompanied with the finished beauties of speech. And can these be expected always to spring forth spontaneously, accidentally, untried for, unsought after? There is an analogy which should not be lost sight of, between this art, and those of music, of painting, of sculpture. The perfection of each consists in a great number of particulars, and

demands care as well as genius to produce it. What would be thought of the painter, who, impatient of application, and disdaining the drudgery of erasing and altering and retouching, should declare that those touches which come in the moment of their first conception, are the only genuine strokes of genius, and that all else is the cold and tame work of mechanical execution. What sort of a picture would his pencil produce? If he were indeed a man of genius, there might be good design, some happy disposition of light, and some striking glimpses of character. But it is plain that it must be, as a whole, unequal, incomplete, unsatisfactory; with a thousand minor blemishes to destroy the general effect, and to mar the pleasure which its marks of talent might give. The only remark would be, that it is a pity so fine a design should be spoiled.

The work before us is precisely such a picture. Its merits are those of fine genius, its faults those of haste. Some examples of each sort it is necessary to produce, in order to justify the remarks we have made.

In the first place, then, a prominent fault of Mr. Percival's poetry, which is found in every collection he has published, and which contributes greatly to embarrass his readers, is—a proneness to run into long periods, where one member is linked to another, until you have fairly lost sight of the idea with which you started, and are bewildered to know where you are. This is owing to the crowd of images and circumstances, which present themselves to the writer's prolific mind, from which he takes no pains to select, but which he feels bound by his system to put down as they occur one after another. This accumulating of circumstances and heaping together of images, tends to confuse and weary the reader, even when they are skilfully arranged. Much more so, when, as is often the case, they are thrown together very inartificially and carelessly, so as not only to fatigue by their number and cloy by their richness, but to perplex by the wilderness they make. It would sometimes require the wand of the fairy whom we read of in Aikin's tales, to disentangle the huge mass of golden and silken threads, and lay them in such order that we can contemplate with pleasure their richness and beauty. In one of the smaller poems, there is a single period thus constructed, of seventy-eight lines in duration, and another in the same poem of thirty-nine. It may easily be imagined how painful must be the suspension of the sense through so long an interval, and how confused the mind must become in attempting to gather together into one, all the parts of which the sentence is composed. There is frequent recurrence of faults similar to this. Periods of twelve, twenty, and thirty lines are not uncommon,

which leave upon the mind an indistinct, unsatisfactory, bewildered sensation, which may be compared to the dazzling of the eye, when it looks at the sunshine through a prismatic glass. We will quote the last of the two passages referred to above. It is of a calmer and less gorgeous character than some, but will serve as an example of what we mean, as well as afford a fair specimen of our author's manner.

'There was a look of calmness in her thin
And delicate features, wasted to a shade,
Like a pure spirit musing on the dark
And sad afflictions of this life below,
And dwelling for a moment on the grief
And sickness of the better few, who trust
In their most hopeless hours, they yet shall find
A sunshine after darkness, and a calm
After the tempest ceaseth, when the eye
Of love shall rest forever on the friends,
They late have seen departing on their long
And unreturning journey, whose cold lids
They closed with pious care, whose stiffen'd limbs
They laid in decent order, and compos'd
Their pale lips to a sweet and dying smile,
And shrouded all in whitest lawn, than which
No flaky snow falls purer, and no curl
Catches a softer tincture from the moon,
To throw a thin veil o'er the stars, and dim
Their brightness to a faint and mellow ray,
Like a lone taper through a curtain, when
Sleep broods above the hamlet, and the sound
Of life is hush'd, and this alone reveals
To him who walks in darkness, that two hearts
Are pouring out their fulness, or a voice,
In the low consecrated tone of prayer,
Is talking with the Universal soul,
And blending with the perfect purity
And majesty of Godhead, or an eye
Is watching o'er the page of lofty thought,
And catching inspiration at the shrine
Of intellect and fancy, till the heart
Big with its high conceptions overflows,
And then his lips pour out the eloquence
Of kindled spirit, and a purer stream
Of language, musical and grand, and full
Of the quick life of mind, is sent abroad,
Than ever meets the anxious ear, when crowds
Drink in the rhetoric of master souls.' pp. 97, 98.

We think every one must be sensible to the beauty of these lines, and no less so to the difficulty of reading and following them which we have pointed out above.

We quote another passage in which the process of the composition may be distinctly discerned.

'But now I turn me to the setting sun,
Whose broad fire dips behind yon rock, a tower
Fit for the eagle's aerie; day is done,
And earth is hush'd at evening's dewy hour;
Down the high wooded peak a golden *shower*
Flows through the twinkling *leaves*, *that* lightly play
In the cool *wind*, *that* wakens from its *bower*
Hung, *where* the curling *river* winds away
Through the green water'd vale, to meet the sheeted bay;

On *which* the *moon*, *who* long had watch'd the set
Of the bright *lord*, *who* gives her light, but dims
Her brightness, when they two in heaven are met,
Casts her pale *shadow*, *which* as softly swims,
As *nymphs*, *who* cleave the waves with snowy *limbs*,
Like *lilies* floating on a falling stream,
Whose incense breathing *cup* now lightly skims
The crinkling sheet, and now with opal gleam
Dips in the brook, and takes from air a brighter *beam*;

Which is condens'd, and parted into *hues*,
That charm us in the *rainbow*;—each wav'd tip
Of the gloss'd petals, in that light imbues
Its paleness with an iris fringe; the lip
Thus takes a sweeter beauty, when we sip
The infant stream of life, from some bright bowl
Fretted with eastern flowers; and as they drip
From the new rose, the pearls of morning roll
Such tints upon the eye, they pass into the soul.' xcvii—xcix.

Here the transition from link to link of the long chain is mostly formed by the relative pronoun—a favourite mode of 'stringing pearls' with our author, but which unfortunately reminds us whenever it occurs, of the structure of the ditty we learned in the nursery, 'This is the house that Jack built.' If he were not principled against deliberation and selection and emendation, he might easily avoid so embarrassing an association.

Another unfortunate consequence of this impatience of revision is—that it leaves some passages in the undefined obscurity in which they first presented themselves to the writer's mind,—under all the awkwardness of a first attempt to express what was indistinctly conceived, and for which the best expressions did not at once occur. What we now refer to is incident to every species of

writing. But in writing verse, especially in a difficult stanza like that of Prometheus, an author may be compelled by the exigency of the case to adopt at first a mode of speech, which he does not altogether approve, which does not perhaps exactly convey his meaning, and which only serves to complete the verse for the present. Now it is an advantage of revision, that it gives an opportunity to amend all this, to make lucid what was obscure, to put a more significant expression in place of one less so, and to throw into a new form those stanzas which were least felicitously wrought. These advantages our author has forborne, and whatever he may have gained by writing impromptu, there are dark spots which he might have made bright if had not printed impromptu. Take the following specimens:

'—— hymns that have been sung, of old
Burning on lips of inspiration, glowing
Deep in those ancient *hearts* of keener mould,
Whose ever restless *mind* its treasure throwing
In lavish gifts around them, and bestowing
New being on the wanderer of the wild;
Those spirits nerv'd with intellect, all-knowing,
Whose voice now *roused* in tenor; now *they smiled*
Reading soft words of love to the delighted child;
With these, and all who,' &c. ix, x.

Here are very obvious improprieties, and an obscurity, which instead of being removed, is only increased by being read in connexion with the other eighteen lines which go to complete the sentence.

'—— hearts have bled,
And *healed themselves to be all callous.*' xv.

'The meeting of two fond eyes, and the beat
Of two accordant pulses *are above*
Planets, that always tend, but never meet.' xix.

'When the glad season with its life imbues
The very clods, and wakens from the slime
Of the low marsh, new forms, that *spread a time*
A pictur'd mantle o'er it:' lxxi.

Perhaps there is here a typographical error.

'—— where we meet
In a fair life, a goodness all unfeigned,
Where one long love of purity hath reigned,
And the meek spirit charms us, like the rose
That in a thicket lurks, and there hath gained
Sweetness from all it fed on, till it throws
New fragrance to the wind, we give a heaven to *those*.' xcii.

'—power to throw
Hope on the impassioned *heart*, *who* in her glow
Reads the fond omen of *his* happy flame.' cv.

'That fond idolater in dying *saw*,
As the day sunk in glory in the deep,
That rolled in gilt waves o'er it with the sweep
Of a far flashing brightness, *there his eye*
Beheld his god enshrined;—his soul could *leap*
At such a calm and holy hour, to *lie*
Serenely on his couch, and with his loved lord die.' cxii.

'in the tomb, when the spirit flings
Its faded slough aside, again to run
In a fresh-glowing spoil, *that gives the sun*
Its light in burnished beauty.' cxlii.

'so from the *doomed* rock
Prometheus saw the sea roll near, his *torture's mock.*' cliv.

'Why was the sense of beauty lent to man?
* * * * *Why* the whole
Waste of creation sweetly *can* control
The fixed heart to devotion?' clxvi.

'Such the smile, hate wrings
From the crushed heart, that hardened *as it bore.*' cciv.

'then dust to dust
Shall meanly moulder; *we* shall be a *thing*
For worms to feast on; do we rightly trust
We shall be then all mind, *or it is a vain lust?*' cxxxvii.

These are examples of inelegancies and improprieties which are wholly needless and inexcusable. We had marked several passages of memorable obscurity, but they are too long to quote. The following are instances of false grammar.

'*Shook* for *Shaken.*' xxxvii.

'O fane
Of Grecian wisdom, that in ruin *lours*
Over the rage of ignorance, again
Thou shalt be bright,' &c. xlvii.

'Those visions, where they wandered, in a maze
Of dreams, that *were* sublime, and *dazzle* all who *gaze.*' lxxxv.

'—When first—*thou*, with front of flame
On the dark face of earth in glory *burst*,
And *warmed* the seas, and in their bosom *nursed*, &c.' cxviii.

We will not pursue this minute criticism, though we have given but some of the examples which we have marked. It is obvious that they are imperfections which a patient revision would easily remedy.

Another unavoidable consequence of this system of rapid and

uncorrected composition, is, the frequent recurrence of the same thoughts and images. He who writes a great deal in a short time, will be likely to repeat himself. Examples of this are not wanting in the present work. The skies and the clouds, the sea, the streams and the flowers, are laid under perpetual contribution, and furnish some embellishment for whatever topic comes up. This is apt to give the reader an impression of uniformity and monotony. Yet we ought not to say this without remarking also the wonderful variety in the manner of using these images, so that although trite and commonplace in themselves, there are not many trite and commonplace allusions. Nothing more strongly manifests the superiority of our author's powers, than this constant variety in the midst of sameness. His mind is a sort of kaleidoscope, which keeps a few bright objects before you, and enchants you with their magical changes. But nobody can be amused with the kaleidoscope forever.

We do not mean to imply that there is any deficiency of other imagery, for on the contrary there is much that is new and striking. It is a wide field from which he gathers flowers, and no one can deny that he chooses with skill and taste. Having cited so largely in censure, we should do wrong if we did not also quote in praise. We gladly give place therefore to a few extracts which may afford specimens of his best manner, though we fear we shall be able to bring forward nothing in which our readers will not detect some of his characteristic blemishes. The following stanza contains a very sweet picture.

'It was from gazing on the fairy hues,
That hung around the born and dying day,
The tender flush, whose mellow stain imbues
Heaven with all freaks of light, and *where it lay*
Deep-bosom'd in a still and waveless bay,
The sea reflected all that glow'd above,
Till a new sky, softer but not so gay,
Arch'd in its bosom trembled like a dove,
When o'er her silken plumes wanders the light of love.' xxvii.

So also this, to the bird of Eden.

'And thou too hast a voice, and oft at night,
When thy wing winds among the stars, 't is said
By those who watch the sky in fix'd delight,
On fairy dreams of wooing fortune led,
When the cool winds, around the flowery bed
Hid in the garden alcove, long delay,
Because the spot is fragrant, then 't is said
The midnight gazer hears thee far away,
Like a sweet angel's voice, salute the coming day.' xli.

We copy next, part of the apostrophe to the sun, which is the most sustained and equal passage in the poem.

'Centre of light and energy! thy way
Is through the unknown void; thou hast thy throne,
Morning, and evening, and at noon of day,
Far in the blue, untended and alone:
Ere the first-waken'd airs of earth had blown,
On thou didst march, triumphant in thy light;
Then thou didst send thy glance, which still hath flown
Wide through the never-ending worlds of night,
And yet thy full orb burns with flash as keen and bright.'

'Thou lookest on the Earth, and then it smiles;
Thy light is hid, and all things droop and mourn;
Laughs the wide sea around her budding isles,
When through their heaven thy changing car is borne:
Thou wheelst away thy flight, the woods are shorn
Of all their waving locks, and storms awake;
All, that was once so beautiful, is torn
By the wild winds, which plough the lonely lake,
And in their maddening rush the crested mountains shake.'

'The vales are thine; and when the touch of Spring
Thrills them, and gives them gladness, in thy light
They glitter, as the glancing swallow's wing
Dashes the water in his winding flight,
And leaves behind a wave, that crinkles bright,
And widens outward to the pebbled shore;——
The vales are thine, and when they wake from night,
The dews, that bend the grass tips, twinkling o'er
Their soft and oozy beds, look upward and adore.

'The hills are thine;—they catch thy newest beam,
And gladden in thy parting, where the wood
Flames out in every leaf, and drinks the stream,
That flows from out thy fulness, as a flood
Bursts from an unknown land, and rolls the food
Of nations in its waters;—so thy rays
Flow and give brighter tints, than ever bud,
When a clear sheet of ice reflects a blaze
Of many twinkling gems, as every gloss'd bough plays.

'Thine are the mountains, where they purely lift
Snows that have never wasted, in a sky
Which hath no stain; below the storm may drift
Its darkness, and the thunder-gust roar by,
Aloft in thy eternal smile they lie
Dazzling but cold;—thy farewell glance looks there.
And when below thy hues of beauty die

Girt round them as a rosy belt, they bear
Into the high dark vault, a brow that still is fair.'

'The ocean is thy vassal;—thou dost sway
His waves to thy dominion, and they go,
Where thou in heaven dost guide them on their way
Rising and falling in eternal flow;
Thou lookest on the waters, and they glow,
They take them wings and spring aloft in air,
And change to clouds, and then dissolving throw
Their treasures back to earth, and rushing tear
The mountain and the vale, as proudly on they bear.'

Having expressed ourselves thus freely and fully concerning the literary merits of the work before us, we still have a few words to add upon another topic, at which indeed we have already hinted. We have not concealed our wish that the author would be more faithful to himself and to the cause of letters, and that he would present the world with some specimens of careful and finished composition. Yet perhaps if he is to use his powers in disturbing the religious faith, and throwing doubts over the religious hopes of his readers, and in propagating by hints and dark allusions, a sort of scepticism respecting the worth and reality of virtuous feeling and moral sentiment—we ought rather to be glad, that he is doing at the same time more, by his mode of writing, to obstruct his own influence, than could he done in any other way. For his offences against the moral sense of society are of a heavier stamp than those against its literary taste; and we certainly could not desire that these should be removed, if the former are to remain. We do not care to have the cup made brighter and more inviting, if it is to contain poisoned waters.

But this is a topic upon which we do not find it easy to speak. For the truth is, there is in these poems no fixed and permanent moral complexion at all; but it is constantly shifting and changing, apparently the sport of accident or circumstance. We have here the strange contradiction of a man eulogizing, in language of strong feeling, the sentiments of a pure morality, and the sublime truths of religion; even writing hymns, and other poems of a religious cast;—and yet, in the same volumes, speaking contemptuously of faith, and doubtingly of futurity, and dealing in sarcasms and sly insinuations, which can be readily construed into nothing but scepticism or infidelity. Now how are we to interpret all this? Is it mere levity, or shall it be accounted something worse? Is the advocate of religion to treat it tenderly and forbearingly, or is he called upon to denounce it harshly, and unsparingly? Are we to question the writer's honesty and sin-

cerity, and suppose that he makes holy subjects only a tool to play with, as suits his fancy at the moment—to be sneered at or lauded, as may produce the best effect? We are forbidden to think this by what appears to us the evident candour and undisguised reality of feeling, which breathe and reign throughout his works. Is it then a mistaken ambition to walk in the path of Byron, and play the misanthrope for the sake of the poetry? This we can hardly reconcile with the high spirit of independence every where manifested, which would seem to disdain this acting of a part in any case, and much more the copying it from another. Are we then to suppose that he has no settled convictions on the all important subjects of human welfare and divine truth? Or is it that he feels and reverences the holy things of religion, as nature and providence teach them, and the pure sentiments of the moral law as *written on the heart;* but has taken disgust at the forms of religious faith, which have been offered him as revelations from God, and has been driven by them from the divinity of our religion? So many men of fine understanding, of deep moral sense, and really devotional susceptibility have been by this cause turned away from the faith and peace of the gospel; which they would have embraced gladly if they had from the first seen it as it is, and never been prejudiced against it; that we cannot help indulging the charitable hope, that this may be the case with the author of these poems, and that he only needs with a sincere heart to study our religion free from the corruptions of man and the strange dogmas which have been mixed with it, and to behold it in its native purity, majesty, and beauty,—in order to throw away the inconsistency of that scepticism which disfigures his writings now, and take to his heart the enjoyment of a message from heaven.

We should not feel ourselves to be doing right, even if we had more room, to quote any of the objectionable passages to which we have alluded. We hope they will be forgotten and perish. For their author, we have better wishes,—that he will have more respect for his own talents, and for the public for whom he writes; and that when we meet him again, we may be able to bestow the unmixt commendation, which belongs to the labours of eminent talents, faithfully devoted to the cause of letters and virtue.

ARTICLE VII.

Sixth Report of the American Bible Society, presented May 9th, 1822. with an appendix, containing extracts of correspondence, &c. &c. New York, Daniel Fanshaw, 1822.

The American Bible Society is persevering in its truly Christian labours with most honourable activity and gratifying success. It appears from the Report before us, that in its sixth year the society printed at its depository, in English and Spanish, 36,375 Bibles and Testaments, and issued in the same period 53,470, a number nearly twice as great as the average of the preceding years since its formation. At the time of this Report being made, there remained in the possession of the society nearly 75,000 Bibles and Testaments. Of the Testaments which have been distributed, the largest number, next to the English, were in the Spanish language. Of the destination of these the following account is given.

'It will be seen, by a subsequent list, that a large number of copies of the New Testament in Spanish, have been sent to various parts of South America, and other places, where the Spanish language is spoken. The Managers find the facility of introducing these Scriptures to be increasing, and the number of those who aid them in this work is considerable. They have been assured that in one place, these Testaments were received as a most acceptable gift by a Roman Catholic Ecclesiastic, that he proceeded immediately to a judicious distribution of them, and that he appeared to engage in this charity with lively pleasure. The Board feel grateful for the assistance with which they have been favoured; and they are determined to embrace and to improve, to the utmost, every opportunity of circulating the Scriptures in Spanish. They rejoice in the prospect of being thus more and more instrumental for the Divine glory, and for the good of multitudes who have hitherto remained ignorant of the Oracles of God, and among whom, till lately, a copy of the Scriptures was hardly to be found. As the truths of Religion become more known, the desire of these persons to possess the Sacred Book, will be more general; and the hope may be entertained with confidence, that in a few years, the New Testament and also the whole Bible, will obtain a vastly greater circulation among those who use the Spanish language in America and in the West Indies. In this work, the British and Foreign Bible Society have already engaged with zeal and vigour, and they are preparing copious editions of the Scriptures for the Spanish and for the Portuguese Catholics.' pp. 14, 15.

Of the Bibles and Testaments issued by the society the number gratuitously distributed was 13,706, valued at $7869.50. The necessity for this appropriation, and the need that yet exists of liberal contributions for the same object, will appear from the following statements among others.

'It will be surprising to some, but the Managers have had it positively asserted to them, and it may not be questioned, that, in the year 1821, in a city where more than one Bible Society had long existed, there were found, in a single ward, no less than thirty-six families living in total ignorance of the Scriptures. They were discovered, and they were supplied without delay by one of the most zealous and valuable of the Auxiliaries of the American Bible Society. But, in the Western States particularly, the necessity is very often manifest, while there is little or no ability to relieve it. By the Corresponding Secretary of one Bible Society there, it was officially stated to your Managers, that, "with proper exertions, five hundred Bibles and five hundred Testaments might be distributed, within a moderate district, during the year, and then the want be not yet supplied." The Corresponding Secretary of another Western Society declared officially, "We could circulate almost any amount that might be sent us." From another Society information was received, that their stock of the Scriptures had long been exhausted; that *their Managers* with a noble liberality, *had purchased Bibles from the stores at their private expense, and given them to the poor;* and that three thousand copies would not be too many as an immediate supply. As to another Society, the Board learned, from undoubted authority, that nearly three thousand Bibles and Testaments have been distributed by it, and yet that the want of the Scriptures was greater than at the time of the organization of the Society, owing to the vast additions to the population within its district, which was calculated to have *trebled* since the Society was formed.' pp. 22, 23.

The amount of contributions of different sorts to the society, during the year ending in May 1822, was $12,280 31, and the amount received into its treasury in payment for Bibles $24,033 52. By the will of its late President it has become possessed of 4,589 acres of land in the state of Pennsylvania, and a legacy of $10,000 has been left it by a citizen of New York. More Auxiliary Societies have been recognized by it during the last year than in the two preceding, and information has been received of a considerable number which have not been recognized. There were in May last 301 auxiliary societies. Of those which were added during the last year we regret to perceive that our state furnished but three, while the state of Delaware and the District of Columbia gave each of them five.

The Report before us contains many interesting statements,—

taken from the publications of the British and Foreign Bible Society,—relating to foreign operations for the distribution of the Scriptures. We have room but for a few extracts.

'The first station among the Bible Societies in our world is held by the British and Foreign Bible Society. Its stupendous labours are continued, and its Committee proceed in their operations with all the wisdom of age, and with all the ardour and vigour of youth. On the 30th of September last, this illustrious Society had 289 Auxiliaries, with 415 Branches and Associations. The number of copies of the Scriptures issued by it, in the year ending in March, 1821, amounted to 104,828 Bibles and 142,129 Testaments, making 246,957 copies. The whole number which the Society had issued, or which had been purchased and issued on its account from its establishment to September 30, 1821, was 3,347,272 Bibles and Testaments. The receipts into its Treasury, during its seventeenth year, were about $396,243, and its expenditures were about $353,603; and, at the close of its seventeenth year, it had expended upwards of four millions of dollars.' pp. 36, 37.

'The Russian Bible Society retains its high standing among the Institutions which are engaged in efforts to spread the sacred volume. In July, 1820, it had 196 Auxiliaries, and many others have since been formed. Some of these minor Societies are found on the very borders of China, and in the extreme parts of the Russian Provinces in Asia. This noble Society is encouraged and aided by the Emperor, and the most distinguished personages in Church and State appear openly as its friends. At the end of its seventh year, it had printed, or was engaged to print, ninety-one editions of the whole Bible, or of parts of the Scriptures, in twenty-six different languages, to the amount of 411,000 copies, and 275,669 copies had already been put into circulation. In its seventh year, it had issued, in thirty-two languages, 68,539 copies. There had been put to press 50,000 copies of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, in the modern Russ and the Slavonian, in parallel columns, and many of them had been circulated. The President of the Society states, that "the parts which have appeared have been received with enthusiasm by the whole nation," and that "the Crimean Tartars, the Calmucs, the Tschuswashians, the Tscheremissians, the Mordwashians, the Karelians, &c. to the most distant inhabitants of the borders of the White Sea, all begin to read in their own languages and dialects the Gospel of Jesus Christ." And it is an express official declaration, that hardly a province in the immense empire of Russia is ignorant of the cause of disseminating the Holy Scriptures.' pp. 38, 39.

'In Switzerland, the Bible cause still advances. The number of Societies had increased, and all appear to possess unabated attachment to their important objects. It is probable that, before this time, a Society has been organized in the Canton of Thurgau, and

thus that a Bible Society exists in every one of the Protestant Cantons.

'The Institution at Basle had printed, or caused to be printed for its use, 108,124 copies of the Scriptures up to June, 1820; and it was yet unable to meet the urgent demands for German Bibles.

'Of the necessity which existed for Bible Societies in some parts of Switzerland, and of the utility which may be expected to result from them, some opinion may be formed from the following anecdote, which relates an actual occurrence in the Canton of Glarus. "Two poor families had received a legacy, of which a Bible formed a part. Neither would resign the right to this invaluable treasure; they, therefore, came to an agreement to use it alternately for half a year each. This practice was observed for several years; at the expiration of every half year, the Bible passed from one family to the other, till, on the establishment of a Bible Society, another copy of the Bible was presented to one of the families, and both were thus happily accommodated."

'In Germany, there is much attention to the diffusion of the Oracles of God, and much exertion is made. "In the kingdom of Wirtemberg, the hearts of the Sovereign and the people appear to be united as the heart of one man, in the work of disseminating the holy Scriptures;" and the Society in this kingdom is one of the most diligent and prosperous on the European Continent. Since its formation, it has distributed more than 45,000 Bibles and Testaments.' pp. 40, 41.

'The Prussian Bible Society, at the close of its sixth year, counted 38 Auxiliaries, and in that year had distributed 40,000 Bibles and Testaments.

'The Societies in Denmark are particularly active and efficient. The Danish Bible Society, in its sixth year, issued 11,320 Bibles and Testaments, and had 36 Auxiliaries.' p. 42.

In the testimony to the character of their late President, with which we close our extracts, and in their unanimous choice of that distinguished and venerable man, Judge Jay, for his successor, the Managers of the American Society have paid a tribute alike to the illustrious living and departed in which they have the universal sympathy of their countrymen.

'The Managers rejoice, that the piety of their departed friend and benefactor was ardent, and his walk exemplary; that his works of faith and of usefulness were so numerous and so noble: and in the confidence that the stroke, which has caused many to mourn their loss, has been to his unspeakable gain. The letters received by the Board on this occasion, and particularly those from the President and one of the Secretaries of the British and Foreign Bible Society, have not only expressed sympathy and condolence, but also been so many evidences of the high sense entertained in this and in

other countries of the character and the exertions of Dr. Boudinot. The monument to his honour, more durable than brass, is the American Bible Society; and instead of merely *some* friends and strangers reading his Epitaph on his tombstone, and *thus* learning or retaining the remembrance of his name and his worth, there will be thousands on thousands, in successive ages, blessing his memory and blessing God on his account, while they witness the usefulness or experience the benefits of the National Institution.' p. 10.

INTELLIGENCE.

Bryant's Poems.—A late number of the Monthly Review in an article upon a volume containing specimens of American poetry, contains the following remarks upon the writings of Mr. Bryant:

'Mr. Bryant's poems exhibit much genius, and if instead of remaining a servile imitator of Lord Byron, he would allow his own powers free scope, we think that he gives promise of finer poetry than any that America has yet produced. His Thanatopsis is a masterly sketch. We will not apologize for the length of our extracts from his poem called the Ages, because we think our readers will be gratified with such specimens of bold conception and animated description. We entertain high expectations of this author, and shall be really glad to welcome his productions on this side the Atlantic.'

We insert these remarks with pleasure, because upon the whole they indicate a disposition to do justice to the merits of Mr. Bryant. But one is really at a loss to conceive in what respect these reviewers can see in Mr. Bryant a servile imitator of Lord Byron. An imitator of him he certainly is not, in any one particular, nor is there any similarity except in the simple matter of the structure of the verse of one of his poems, for which he has older and higher authority than Lord Byron. There is a resemblance neither in language nor in sentiment. The pure and chaste strain of moral feeling which pervades the poems of Bryant, the essential spirit of devotion which breathes through them, are as different from the impurity, the obscenity, and the impiety of Lord Byron's, the later ones particularly, as the wholesome state of society in a New England country village, from the luxurious profligate, corrupt, and vitiated community in which the English

Peer is throwing away his life, far from the duties to which his rank and station call him, and abusing the talents which were given him for better purposes than to write ribbald verses, and strive to bring into contempt all that is holy in religion and dignified in virtue.

Evangelical Missionary Society.—The trustees of this society have lately issued an address to the public soliciting aid in carrying into effect its important objects. From this Address, which states fully the objects and wants of the institution, we make a few extracts.

'Where there are small societies, and the members are disposed to contribute to the support of religious worship and instruction according to their ability, yet do not possess means altogether sufficient for the purpose, there is a loud call for foreign aid. Ignorance and error will thus be prevented from spreading, and these societies will be gradually enlarged, and become adequate to provide for themselves.—Now this is a primary object of the Evangelical Missionary Society of Massachusetts. It proposes to do something to repair the walls of our own Jerusalem, and to prevent the inroads of infidelity and fanaticism. While there is much to be done at *home*, to maintain the cause of true religion, we shall be justly chargeable with unfaithfulness to our divine Master, if we do not make corresponding exertions.

'The Society was formed in 1807. The original members belonged to the counties of Worcester and Middlesex. But it was their early wish and plan to have associates from all parts of the State; and it now embraces Suffolk, Essex, Norfolk, and Plymouth. An Auxiliary Society has also been established in the State of Maine. The history of its labours and beneficial effects in various places, give ample testimony of its laudable design and prudent management. Reports of its proceedings have been annually published, shewing the number of places in which religious instructers have been employed, and the attention and gratitude of the people among whom they laboured.'

'We are induced also to extend our views to distant parts of the country, where the population is rapidly increasing; but where the light of the gospel has yet shed little influence.

'We cannot believe that our friends will fail to perceive the importance of this object, or will withhold the aid necessary to accomplish it. In a country where the face of society is continually shifting as it is here, and new settlements are pushing themselves into the wilderness, beyond the reach, almost, of those institutions which our older states so happily enjoy; a great deal

needs to be done to cause the means of religion and education to keep pace with the increase of population. Without some extraordinary effort, it will not be possible to establish churches and schools in any proportion to the establishment of towns and villages; and the consequence must be, that large tracts of our distant country will be settled and become populous, without the advantages of education and religion; or, at least, will be left to the occasional and contradictory teachings of travelling preachers. There are some towns, even in New England, in which the institutions of religion are not supported. How many might we then suppose there must be on the frontiers of civilization, where the salutary neighbourhood of our numerous churches is wanting?—And we find it to be so in fact. It is well known that there are large tracts of country, collections of numerous and flourishing towns, in which the voice of preaching is rarely heard, and where the happy influence of a stated ministry is unknown. The consequences of their continuing in such a state must be most melancholy. And it is a state which they cannot remedy themselves, even if they have the disposition. But even the disposition must, in many cases, be imparted to them. Those who enjoy the blessing must diffuse it.—The necessity of this has been felt by many who have turned their thoughts to the subject; and efforts have consequently been made to effect something. More, however, needs to be done—much more. The Evangelical Missionary Society desires to bear a part in the work, and to excite its religious friends to an interest in it, proportioned to its vast importance. Until this is excited, and they come forward generously, and put into our hands the necessary means, we shall be compelled to sit still, the mortified spectators of a good work doing by others, in which we are not permitted to share; and, what is more painful still, anxious witnesses of the spiritual suffering of our fellow-men, which we have no means of relieving. We shall be compelled, also, to look forward to the day when irreligion and immorality shall gain the ascendancy in some portions of our land, and endanger, perhaps, the peace and welfare, as well as the honour and fair name, of our country; and to lament that we were not permitted to put forward a hand to check the evil in its commencement.

'We therefore beg our friends as men, as christians, as philanthropists, and as patriots, to give their attention to this most interesting subject, and inquire if they can conscientiously refuse to aid the design we propose. We acknowledge that they have done something—but can they think that they have done enough? They have furnished to this, their only domestic missionary so-

ciety, only to the amount $700 a year*—not enough even to answer the pressing demands of our own state.† What is it, then, in proportion to what is needed for even commencing this large work, to which the state of our country, and the character of the times, call us? If we are right in reading our duty in this respect, we trust our friends will not be backward in their encouragement. We make our appeal to them, and wait for the result.

'It is but right that they should know more definitely the plan we wish to execute. We state, therefore, that it is not our design, as it has not been our practice, to send one man to travel over a vast surface of country, merely calling for a few days at every town. We have a purpose, as we think, of more settled good.—Our object would be to select a place where there was a promise of doing good, and send a preacher to reside there, with the aid, if possible, of some of the inhabitants; with the hope that his labours might be so blessed, and so acceptable, that at length he should have around him a regular society, which should support him without assistance. When this should take place, the same means might be used in accomplishing a similar work elsewhere; and thus church after church be gathered. Is not this a feasible, laudable design? We have operated in this way in time past, and with even our feeble means, have had cause to rejoice in doing evident good. How much good, substantial, unquestionable, permanent good, might be done, in thus bringing village after village to the love and the habit of maintaining religious Institutions!

'This is not all. For a part of the plan would be to obtain for our preachers the office of instructers of youth, and thus to extend, as far as possible, the improvements of education, together with the lessons of religion.

'When the expenditure of a few thousand dollars a year would promote this work with a visible progress, we cannot believe that our fellow christians will deny us the means of making the experiment. We trust that they only need to have the way pointed out, and they will feel it a duty to aid in it.'

'There is an accumulating fund of about $4000, which has been formed of the larger donations and contributions. There have been many donations of $50, and many of smaller sums, from individuals; one of $2000;—annual contributions by the Ladies in West Church, and New North Church, Boston; in North Church, Salem; in Brookline, Northborough, Concord,

* The annual receipts of the Society have been but about $400; to which add the income of the fund, $300, and the whole disposable funds are but $700 a year.

† In February there were urgent applications for aid from seven places in Maine, and seven in Massachusetts; to only six of which could assistance be afforded.

Worcester, &c.; and occasional contributions in too many parishes to be enumerated.

It ought to be understood however, that it is more desirable to have a constant stream of small sums, than rare contributions of large amount. The Society is far most indebted to those who aid it a little every year. It is very desirable that the number of annual subscribers should be increased. It is desirable also that *Auxiliary Societies* should be formed. If the ladies, or the young men, of our several parishes, would form among themselves auxiliary societies, to which they would pay but fifty cents a year, the whole annual sum thus collected would be very important. *Drops added to drops, constitute the ocean.* To effect this, would demand nothing but the active exertions of one or two individuals in each society.

Another mode of aiding this object, might be by *annual contributions* in our churches. Few of our churches are ever called upon to contribute for religious charity. But certainly, it is a very little thing to ask that Christians should once a year put in their mite to aid the extension of religion among their destitute fellow-men. It might easily be shown that no man can reasonably do less than this. Many churches have a collection at Thanksgiving for the poor; why not another at Fast for domestic missions? What might be expected to be the result?

'First of all, we should become more generally interested in the cause and progress of religion, and should be sure of doing something systematically in the high duty of benevolence. Many do nothing in it, or nothing right, for want of some system.

'Then, in the next place, how easily would the sums which are needed be thus obtained. There are about one hundred parishes of a character to patronize this society for home missions.—Take the rich with the poor, and their contributions could not be on an average less than $40. Add to this, annual subscriptions and auxiliary societies, which might average $10, and we have $50 from each of the hundred parishes. This will give *five thousand dollars* a year.

'How much good might be done with this sum! How little exertion of a few individuals in each church, would collect it! We hope that there will not be found wanting those who will do it.'

Annual Report of the New-York Unitarian Book Society.

'Believing that it is of the utmost importance to the interest of virtue and the well-being of society, that our religious opinions should be free from error, since our practice is always influenced more or less by our speculative tenets—and that nothing will so

effectually tend to bring to light true religion, and dispel erroneous doctrine as a free inquiry into the doctrine and meaning of the holy Scripture—and that free inquiry is provoked and aided by nothing so much as a ready access to the best books on theological subjects;—with such impressions, a few of the members of the First Congregational Church, about two years since, joined themselves into an association under the style of the "Unitarian Book Society," for the purpose of printing and distributing tracts, both moral, practical and doctrinal, and of collecting a library of substantial works on theological subjects. We fondly hoped in this way to do some service to the great cause of religious truth—to give to the uninformed the means of enlightening themselves—to furnish the inquiring with books such as may satisfy their doubts, or at least enable them to pursue their researches—and more than all, to place in the hands of those who were unable to purchase expensive works, short and cheap treatises on the doctrines and duties of Christianity.

'During this time, many valuable tracts have been printed and disseminated. The books on our shelves, such as they are, have been in constant requisition, by which, somewhat has been accomplished, we trust, toward removing what we believe to be most unhappy corruptions of the gospel of Christ, and restoring it to its long lost simplicity; and toward mending the lives, purifying the affections, enlivening the piety and strengthening the faith of many Christians who have been asking the way to Zion. If an individual has by our efforts been brought to solemn reflection,—if one sinner has been shown the error of his ways and reclaimed,—if one anxious and conscientious mind has been set at rest,—we shall not think that our labour has been in vain.

'With the Annual Report, the committee present to the subscribers catalogues of the library, and of the tracts for sale. We have reason, so far, to be well pleased with the success of our undertaking. Books have been presented, and deposited, and donations sent in with a very commendable liberality. We gladly take occasion publickly to make acknowledgment to those who have lent us their countenance and aid. Much however remains to be done. Our funds are small, and by no means such as to allow of so rapid an increase of our volumes and tracts as we could wish. Many book are exceedingly desirable, almost essential, which we are unable to purchase, and many tracts are wanted which we cannot afford to republish. We hope, therefore, that those who have helped us hitherto will not withdraw their support, and that others will be induced to join our society, that we may enter upon this year with a prospect of promoting more to our satisfaction the objects of its institution.

'We will only add, that it is by no means our intention to confine our selection of books to those on theological subjects, much less to those that are merely controversial in their character. We are also desirous of possessing standand works in general lierature, history, sciences, &c. Nor is it our intention or wish to restrict the use of our volumes, or the privilege of subscription to the members of our church. We would have it considered as open to all of every denomination who many wish to avail themselves of its advantages.'

American Bible Society.—The American Bible Society, have lately erected a building for the use of the Society, in Nassau-street, in the city of New-York—' The front of the building is fifty-five feet upon Nassau-street, and extends back thirty feet, when it is contracted to the breadth of thirty feet, and runs that width to Theatre alley seventy feet, making the whole depth from front to rear one hundred feet. In the basement are rooms for the accommodation of the keeper and his family—a large cellar, and rooms for fuel for the various occupants of the building. On the first floor of the front part of the house is one large room for the use of the agent, and two smaller ones for the secretaries and committees. The rest of this floor is devoted to the general purposes of a depositary for the books issued by the Society, and will hold nearly sixty thousand bibles and testaments. On the second story in front is the room appropriated to the use of the managers. This occupies the entire front of the house, and is fifty by thirty feet, including the walls, and sixteen feet in height, and is neatly but not splendidly finished. The rear is divided into two rooms for the use of the binder, as is the corresponding room on the third story ; the front of both being taken up by the managers room. The third story of the front, and fourth of the rear, are occupied by the printer. There are twelve presses in the office, six of which are devoted to the Society's service, and as many more are to be employed as they may require.

The foundation of this building has been laid and the edifice completed, since the last spring ; and though the cost of the house and the ground has exceeded 20,000 dollars, no part of the amount is to be taken from the ordinary funds of the Society. A considerable portion of the money has been raised by subscription, and principally from individuals in this city. The residue has been raised by a loan ; and we hope we are not too sanguine when we express our expectation that it will be repaid by further contributions from the liberal and benevolent, who regard the objects as worthy the patronage and support of a christian community.

The completion of this house is a very interesting event in the history of the American Bible Society. All the business of the Institution, which is to be transacted under the immediate direction of the managers at home, will henceforward be carried on in the building. Here the agent and other executive officers of the Society will be furnished with rooms for their respective accommodation; and here a large number of mechanics will find employment in the Society's service."—*N. Y. Daily Advertiser.*

Religious Notions of the Indian Nations on the Missouri—From Long's Expedition to the Rocky Mountains.

Konzas.—They bear sickness and pain with great fortitude, seldom uttering a complaint; by-standers sympathize with them and try every means to relieve them. Insanity is unknown; the blind are taken care of by their friends and the nation generally, and are well dressed and fed. Drunkenness is rare, and is much ridiculed; a drunken man is said to be bereft of his reason and is avoided. As to the origin of the nation, their belief is, that the Master of life formed a man, and placed him on the earth; he was solitary and cried to the master of life for a companion, who sent him down a woman; from the union of these two proceeded a son and a daughter, who where married and built themselves a lodge distinct from that of their parents; all the nations proceeded from them excepting the whites, whose origin they pretend not to know. When a man is killed in battle the thunder is supposed to take him up they do not know where. In going to battle each man traces an imaginary figure of the thunder on the soil, and he who represents it incorrectly is killed by the thunder. A person saw this thunder one day on the ground, with a beautiful mockasin on each side of it; having much need of a pair, he took them and went his way; but on his return by the same spot the thunder took him off, and he has not been since heard of. They seem to have vague notions of a future state. They think that a brave warrior, or good hunter, will walk in a good path; but a bad man or coward will find a bad path. Thinking the deceased has far to travel they bury with his body, mockasins, some articles of food, &c. to support him on the journey. Many persons they believe, have become reanimated, who had been, during their apparent death, in strange villages; but as the inhabitants used them ill they returned. They say they have never seen the Master of life, and therefore cannot pretend to personify him; but they have often heard him speak in the thunder; they wear often a shell, which is in honour or in representation of him, but they do not pretend that it resembles him, or has any thing in common with his form, organization or dimensions.–p. 125-126.

The Missouri Indians believe earthquakes to be the effect of supernatural agency, connected, like the thunder, with

the immediate operations of the Master of life. The earthquakes which in the year 1811, almost destroyed the town of New-Madrid of the Mississippi, were very sensibly felt on the upper portion of the Missouri country, and occasioned much superstitious dread amongst the Indians. During that period a citizen of the United States resided in the village of the Otoes, trading for the produce of their hunts. One day he was surprized by a visit of a number of Otoes in anger. They said that a Frenchman, who was also trading in the village, had informed them, that the Big-knives had killed a son of the Master of life; that they had seen him riding on a white horse in a forest country, and being of a sanguinary disposition they had waylaid and shot him. And it was certainly owing to this act that the earth was now trembling before the anger of the great Wahconda. They believed the story implicitly, and it was with no little difficulty that the trader divested his own nation of the singular crimination.—p. 272.

Omawhaws.—This people believe firmly in an existence after death; but they do not appear to have any definite notions, as to the state in which they shall then be. And although they say that many re-appear after death, to their relatives, yet such visitants communicate no information respecting futurity. They consist of those only who have been killed either in battle with the enemy, or in quarrels with individuals of their own nation, and their errand is to solicit vengeance on the perpetrators of the deed.

Futurity has no terrors to the dying Omawhaw, as he has no idea of actual punishment, beyond his present state of existence. He, however, regrets the parting from his family and friends, and sometimes expresses his fears that the former will be impoverished, when his exertions for their support, shall be withdrawn.

The Wahconda is believed to be the greatest and best of beings, the creator and preserver of all things, and the fountain of mystic medicine. Omniscience, omnipresence and vast power are attributed to him, and he is supposed to afflict them with sickness, poverty, or misfortune for their evil deeds. In conversation he is frequently appealed to as an evidence of the truth of their asseverations, in the words Wahconda-wa-nah-kong, 'the Wahconda hears what I say,' and they sometimes add Mun-ekuh-wa-nah-kong, 'the earth hears what I say.' Whatever may be the notions of other Indian nations, we did not learn that the Omawhaws, have any distinct ideas of the existence of the devil; or at least, we always experienced much difficulty and delay, when obtaining vocabularies of this and some other languages, in ascertaining corresponding words for *Devil* and *Hell;* the Indians would consult together, and, in one instance, the interpreter told us they were coining a word.

They say that after death, those who have conducted them-

selves properly in this life, are received into the Wanoch-a-te, or town of brave and generous spirits; but those who have not been useful to the nation, or their own families, by killing their enemies, stealing horses, or by generosity, will have a residence prepared for them in the town of poor and useless spirits; where, as well as in the good town, their usual avocations are continued.

Their Wahconda seems to be a Protean God; he is supposed to appear to different persons, under different forms. All those who are favoured with his presence become medicine men or magicians, in consequence of thus having seen and conversed with the Wahconda, and of having received from him some particular medicine of wondrous efficacy.

He appeared to one in the shape of a grizzly bear, to another in that of a bison, to a third in that of a beaver, or owl, &c. and an individual attributed to an animal, from which he received his medicine, the form and features of the elephant.

All the magi, in the administration of their medicine to the sick or afflicted, mimic the action and voice, variously exaggerated and modified, of the animal, which, they say is their respective medicine, or in other words, that in which the Wahconda appeared to them.—267-268.

Minnetarees.—The Minnetarees in common with several other nations of our Indians, have the strange tradition of their origin, that they formerly lived under ground. 'Two boys' say they, 'strayed away from them, and absented themselves several days. At length they returned and informed the nation that they, had discovered another world, situate above their present residence, where all was beautiful and light. They saw the sun, the earth, the Missouri and the bison. This account so delighted the people, that they immediately abandoned their subterranean dwelling, and, led by the boys, arrived on the surface of the earth, at the spot which their villages now occupy and where they have dwelt ever since.

They seem to have full faith in the notion that, at their death, they will be restored to the mansions of their ancestors under ground, from which they are intercepted by a large and rapid water course. Over this river which may be compared to the Styx of the ancients, they are obliged to pass on a very narrow footway. Those Indians who have been useful to the nation, such as brave warriors or good hunters, pass over with ease, and arrive safely at the A-pah-he, or ancient village. But the worthless Indians slip off from the bridge or footway, into the stream that foams beneath in the swiftness of its course, and which hurries them into oblivion, or Lethe. The Mandans according to Lewis and Clarke, have a tradition somewhat similar, and it strongly reminds us of the Alsirat of Mahomet, over which, it was

supposed, that great leader was to conduct his Moslems to the bliss of futurity, whilst the unworthy were precipitated into the gulph which yawned beneath it.

We believe that the donations to the Evangelical Missionary Society, from the ladies of the North Parish in Salem, have not always been published as they were made. We therefore insert the following list.

In 1816, $69—in '17, $57 56—'18, $49 27—in '19, $47 89—in '20 $42 72—in '21 $47—in '22 $60 67.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Remarks on the miraculous character of our Lord: by a Berean Layman, Boston, pp. 30.

A Collection of Essays and Tracts in Theology, No. 2, April 1823. Contents, Arch Deacon Blackbourn—Biographical Notice—on Confessions of Faith. Bishop Hoadly, Biographical Notice, Dedication to the Pope—on the Nature of the Kingdom of Christ—on divisions among christians.

A Postscript to the second series of Letters to Trinitarians and Calvinists, by Henry Ware, D.D.

The Bible Christian's honest declaration and brief reply: by one who daily reads, occasionally hears and preaches the gospel. Boston, True & Green, pp. 21.

A Tract entitled Smooth Preaching. New-York, pp. 16.

Obituary.

Dr. Jenner, the celebrated discoverer of vaccination, died at Berkely, after an illness of about seventeen hours on Sunday, 21st of February 1823, in the 74th year of his age.

Dr. Jenner, in the early part of his career, was destined to the profession of surgery, under the tuition of John Hunter, and afterwards encouraged by the friendship and patronage of his great preceptor, to practice that branch of the healing art in London. Preferring tranquillity to fame, Jenner declined these flattering prospects and returned to practice as physician in his native place, Berkely, little aware how much this determination involved the interests of mankind or his own individual reputation. His experiments on the cow pox were begun in 1797; and in the following year, with the laudable zeal of a disinterested mind, he communicated to the world a discovery, the concealment of which would have put it in his power to acquire wealth, we may almost say without bounds.

We are informed that the meekness and simplicity of demeanour of the excellent and amiable individual to whom we are indebted for this discovery, formed a striking contrast to the self esteem which might have arisen from its splendid consequences. He was thankful and grateful to God; but to pride and vain glory, he seemed to be an utter stranger. A short time before his death, the nature of his services to his fellow creatures having been the subject of conversation: 'I do not wonder' he observed, 'that men are not grateful to me; but I am surprized that they do not feel gratitude to God, for making me a medium of good.' This was the habitual frame of his mind. He invariably exhibited an exemplary uprightness of conduct, singleness of purpose and disinterested earnestness to promote the welfare of his species. These qualities particularly arrested the attention of the many distinguished foreigners who came to visit him; and were not less the cause of satisfaction and delight to his friends. The last public act of his life harmonized with his previous efforts in behalf of his fellow creatures. He attended a meeting convened on the 9th of December last, at Berkely, for forming a Bible Society, and moved the first resolution. It was doubtless a sight singularly gratifying, to behold a venerable individual, whose life had been spent in successfully devising means to extinguish a pestilential bodily disease thus putting his hand to a work which has been designed for arresting the moral pestilence that desolates so large a portion of the earth, and for the healing of the nations—*Ch. Observer.*

NOTICE.

The annual meeting of THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN BERRY STREET, will take place on the morning of Election Day—at *half past* EIGHT *o'clock*, precisely.

H. WARE, Jr. *Sec.*

THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

NEW SERIES—No. 27.

May and June, 1823.

THE MEANS TO BE USED BY MINISTERS FOR GIVING THE YOUNG ADEQUATE VIEWS OF THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY.—AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE MINISTERS ASSEMBLED IN BERRY STREET, MAY 28, 1823.

The subject assigned for our consideration this morning is, "the means to be used by ministers for giving the young adequate views of the nature and importance of true Christianity."

These means present themselves to our consideration under two general classes; first, those of which a pastor may avail himself for the instruction of the young of his immediate charge, and secondly, those by which such views of religion, as we believe to be just and important, may, with the best hope of success, be communicated to the young throughout the community at large. The first class may be sub-divided into those, by which the pastor may act directly upon the minds of the youth, who statedly attend upon his ministry; and those, again, by which he may act indirectly through the agency and instruction of parents and other instructors of children and youth, in our common schools, over which, in most parishes, the minister is expected and appointed to exercise a certain degree of care and supervision.

I. In respect to the first division of the first class of means, there are several that are very obvious, and, I presume, duly estimated and occasionally employed by all of us in the customary discharge of our pastoral duties. I need not name to my brethren the ordinary means of instructing the young in the essential doctrines and duties of true christianity from the pulpit. Every faithful minister will regard this portion of his charge with pecu-

liar interest; and will feel himself impelled to sow, with no sparing hand, the good seed of christian instruction upon 'the good ground,' which the uncorrupted and unprejudiced minds of the young of his charge present for its reception, and which, for the most part, are disposed to receive his instructions with docility, and to repay his labours with much fruit. Discourses addressed particularly to the young, naturally engage their particular attention, and often, without doubt, produce the most salutary and durable impressions upon their mind and heart, and contribute essentially to form and regulate their principles and conduct in after life. In these discourses a minister has opportunity for inculcating such views of christian doctrines and duties, as he may wish should be believed and practised by the youth of his charge. He may, with great propriety and with great benefit, we conceive, address the young in a series of discourses, treating systematically the subjects, upon which he is especially desirous that they may be fully and definitely informed. The spirit of inquiry, which is so generally awake at the present day, in our congregations, is not confined to the mature in years. It pervades the young, and is rendered more keen and ardent in them by the curiosity natural at their period of life, and by their exemption from the prejudices and prepossessions of their elders, who, having formed their opinions upon religion, regard any additional information and more enlightened views upon the subject, as tending rather to bring their faith into jeopardy, than to improve and strengthen it. In this way the elementary principles of natural and revealed religion, as understood and explained by Unitarians, may be stated with great plainness and simplicity, professedly to meet the understanding of the young; while, at the same time, many of our elder hearers may be equally edified by these simple and perspicuous statements.

Much may, without doubt, be done in this way towards instructing the young of our charge in the true nature and importance of *rational, practical* christianity. Such a course of systematic instruction from the pulpit, addressed to the young, might be rendered much more interesting and efficacious than the desultory and miscellaneous and occasional manner, in which the subjects of rational christianity are usually presented to our hearers. We should, however, studiously avoid presenting it in a controversial form. This is an evil, which cannot be altogether avoided, when we would inculcate more enlightened views upon those of our hearers, whose opinions are already formed. We must combat their prejudices and expose their errors, in order to prepare the way for the reception of the better sentiments, which we wish them to embrace. No such obstacles existing in

the minds of the young, they need not be apprised that any other views have been received as constituting a part of christianity, than those in which we would instruct them, and upon which we would assist them to rear the superstructure of personal righteousness, of genuine christian piety and holiness. We have the example of eminent divines for pursuing this method of inculcating from the pulpit just views of religion and of practical piety upon the young in the series of discourses addressed to the young by Dr. Mayhew, by Zolikoffer and others.

But perhaps the mature in years, in many of our congregations, might not be prepared to hear with candour, or to receive with profit, all that we might wish to impart to the young. What might be equally acceptable and useful to the young, might be offensive and even injurious to their elders. Besides this, the demand for occasional discourses, which so frequently arises from the events of Providence and the varying circumstances of our people, might not permit us to deliver a connected series of discourses of such a character, as we might wish to address to the young. Where, for these or other reasons, it might not be deemed expedient to pursue the course above suggested, the method recommended and practised by Dr. Priestley may be adopted, as possessing all the advantages of systematic instruction from the pulpit, with many others, without being liable to the inconveniences of the other. 'I would advise,' says he, 'a minister to form the young men of his congregation,' of a suitable age, 'into an *academical class*, and take the very same methods to teach them the elements of religion, that he would do to teach them the rudiments of any branch of natural knowledge.' Meeting thus with the young apart by themselves, 'the minister,' he observes, 'may converse with them familiarly' upon the subjects on which he would have them duly instructed; 'he may say the same things over and over again, and change his form of expression in order to make himself perfectly understood; he may also illustrate what he advances by familiar instances and examples, and set every thing of importance in a great variety of lights. Moreover,' continues he, 'if they will submit to it, (which it will be greatly to their advantage to do) he may *examine* them on the subjects upon which he has discoursed, so as to satisfy himself, whether they have perfectly understood him, whether they retain in memory the facts and reasonings which he has advanced, and be sufficiently grounded in one thing, before he proceeded to another. This method will also give him an opportunity of removing any difficulties, or answering any objections, which may have occurred to them, or which may have been thrown in their way by other persons.'

'In order to make this business the easier to the instructor and the more advantageous to his pupils, it will be rather advisable, that he give his lectures from a short text or system, written, or rather printed, that they may have an opportunity of perusing it, and of studying it, when they are by themselves, and thereby the better prepare themselves for examination.'

The doctor adds, 'I do not give this advice at random, or from theory only; for I have carried the scheme, which I am now recommending, into execution; and can assure my friends in the ministry, that as far as my own experience is a guide, they may promise themselves much pleasure, and their pupils much advantage from the exercise.'

Every minister must judge for himself, whether his particular circumstances, and those of the society with which he is connected, will permit him to make the experiment of this mode of instructing the young of his charge in those principles and views of christianity, which we regard as exhibiting most clearly and faithfully its true character and importance. For a text book, it might be well to make use of Dr. Priestley's 'Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion,' retrenching, adding, or altering the matter, as such instructor might, in his own case, deem expedient. A brief abstract of his 'History of the Corruptions of Christianity,' might also furnish useful matter for these lectures, or conferences with the young. These meetings might be held monthly, or at such intervals as should best accommodate pastor and pupils. A class of young females might be formed and instructed, with equal advantage, in the same manner.

The once almost universal custom in New-England, of catechising the children of the congregation, may be employed as an efficient means of imparting to this interesting portion of our charge, as they are able to receive them, *just views of the nature and importance of true christianity.* This custom, where it has been discontinued, might be resumed with great advantage. Suitable catechisms, or brief manuals, may be easily obtained or prepared, containing the elementary principles of the christian doctrines and duties, presented in the form, and breathing the spirit, with which we wish them to be first associated in the infant mind. This, I conceive to be a point of the greatest interest and importance, to which the friends of pure and uncorrupted christianity have not been sufficiently attentive. Our brethren of *the five points* have understood and appreciated this matter rightly. They have shown themselves fully aware of the advantage to be derived to the cause of orthodoxy from pre-occupying the minds of children with the dogmas of Calvinism contained in the 'Westminster Assembly's Catechism.' Hence the

origin and moving spring of that mighty engine for preserving and propagating the peculiarities of their creed, I mean the Sunday school system. By the operation of this system they are sowing upon every patch of our master's vineyard, that yet remains under their exclusive culture, together with the good seed of the word of life, the tares of human speculation and traditionary error. Be it ours, my brethren, to avail ourselves, as far as may be deemed by each of us expedient, of the same means of planting those portions of our Master's vineyard, the earliest culture of which is assigned to us, with the good seed, carefully separated from what appears to us to be tares.

We cannot perform a more acceptable service to the great Shepherd of the sheep and of the lambs, than thus to impress the tender and susceptible minds of the 'little children' of our charge with those simple, sublime, yet most intelligible truths, which he has left us in the uncorrupted gospels, with which to feed both his sheep and his lambs, as he has so tenderly enjoined it upon his ministers to do. At the same time, we can hardly name a more efficient means of providing for the prevalence and future progress of what we deem correct views of our religion, than that of early imbuing the minds of the generation, that is rising up under our ministry, with these views, at once the most simple and rational, as well as the most interesting, affecting and grateful to the young and uncorrupted mind.

II. Besides these and other means, by which ministers may act directly upon the minds of the young of their charge, there are others, by which they may act indirectly, through the agency and influence of parents and others, to whom the early culture and formation of the infant and youthful mind are committed, While we inculcate upon parents, as our office requires of us, the duty of instructing their children in the religion of the gospel, we may suggest to them the best methods of performing this duty with success,—with interest and profit to their children. We may point out and recommend to them the most approved manuals or compendiums of christian doctrines and duties, from which they may teach their children 'the first principles of the oracles of God.' Many parents omit this duty, it is probable, solely for the want of this encouragement and aid from their pastor, and which it is so easy for him to render. An occasional appeal upon this subject, from the pulpit, to the tender affection and solicitude of mothers for the moral welfare of their offspring, might be made, we conceive, with great propriety and with powerful effect.

The gratuitous distribution of catechisms, of moral and religious tracts, containing just and interesting views and illustra-

tions of christian doctrines and duties, is another means, by which the object before us may be successfully promoted. We may put these catechisms and tracts into the hands of schoolmasters and mistresses, and engage their cooperation in distributing them among their pupils, and in assigning lessons to be learned from them, and to be recited at school, upon certain specified days.

We may also exert an indirect and important influence upon the expanding minds and forming sentiments of the young, by the selection and recommendation of suitable books to be used in schools. The contents of these books, so often read and daily reviewed as they are, by the pupils, must make the most deep and lasting impressions upon their memory; and according to the character of the matter, will be productive of good or ill effects in the formation of their moral and religious principles and habits, so far as these are effected,—and they are in no inconsiderable degree,—by the books with which they are most familiar. We may excite and assist in the young a spirit of inquiry upon the subject of religion, by our conversation; and when this spirit is awakened, we may recommend and lend to them the books, which contain the best views and reasonings upon the subjects, with which we may deem it most desirable, that they should obtain an early and familiar acquaintance. These are some of the most obvious and practicable '*means to be used by ministers for communicating to the young of their charge, just views of the nature and importance of true christianity.*' There are, doubtless, other means of accomplishing this object, which the more mature reflection of my brethren may suggest, and which the experience of my seniors in the ministry may already have tested and approved. None of us, it is probable, will find it expedient to avail ourselves of all the means, that have been suggested; but we may all avail ourselves of some of them, and many of us of most of them.

III. There are other means of promoting the object before us in respect to the youth of the community at large, which it may become us to employ, as a class of men to whom the friends of pure and liberal christianity look for the provisions and aids, which may most effectually contribute to form the religious principles and moral character of the generation, that is to succeed us, according to the pure faith and practical views, which we and they earnestly wish may prevail, and which we believe must ultimately prevail. Some of these means are already, and have been for some time past in operation. I beg leave to direct the particular attention of my brethren to 'the *Publishing Fund*,' the object of which is to print and furnish, at the lowest possible cost, tracts and books, containing such views and illustrations of

the doctrines, precepts and spirit of our religion, as are suited to inform the understanding and to regulate the heart and life of the common people, and particularly the young. Such of us, as may feel ourselves competent to contribute to this object either money or the labours of the pen, will not be backward, I am persuaded, to render either or both, as we may be able, in aid of this good work. And such of us, as may feel ourselves excused by our circumstances from contributing either the contents of our purses or our minds, may at least lend our aid in promoting the circulation of the tracts and books furnished to our hands. Much good has been done, and much more may be done in this way. Besides that of the Publishing Fund, there are other associations, as is well known to my brethren, whose publications are of a similar character, and have in view the promotion of the same general object. The more numerous publications of the kind become, and the more widely and generally they are diffused, and the more rational and instructive and interesting their contents, the sooner will they succeed, we may hope, in consigning to neglect and oblivion the *sectarian* tracts and treatises, with which the *world* has been well nigh filled by the multiplied and multiplying orthodox societies and their zealous, indefatigable agents.

In addition to these occasional publications, may it not be expedient, by and by, to try the experiment of a periodical paper, devoted exclusively to the instruction of the young, containing matter of a religious and moral character, and in a form suited to attract the attention to inform the understanding, and to mould the dispositions of its youthful readers to the genuine temper and spirit of the gospel?

But the means which, I conceive, would prove the most effectual of any that has yet been tried or named, and which it is most desirable that measures should be taken to provide, as soon as may be, is a faithful translation of the New Testament from the corrected text of Griesbach, accompanied with notes and a commentary giving a clear and concise explanation of all difficult or obscure passages, according to the most approved interpretations of the most able, enlightened and judicious critics of the age. Such a work, furnished in a cheap and, as far as may be consistent with accuracy and completeness, popular form would contribute more to promote, both in the young and mature, "*adequate views of the nature and importance of true christianity*" than all that has yet been delivered from the pulpit, or sent abroad from the press. Lucid and rational exposition of the meaning of the christian records,—of every chapter and phrase, which needs such exposition, is precisely the thing, that is wanted to counteract the effect of Scott's Family Bible, which

is breeding up young Calvinists in every family, in which it is daily read, morning and evening throughout our country; and in many families it is read, only because another of the description to which I refer, is not to be obtained. Until such a publication is provided and is attainable by all, who wish to understand what they read in the christian scriptures, it seems to me, we are prosecuting our work at great disadvantage. The cause, which we have at heart, demands such a work of its friends. If we deem it an object of paramount importance to refute and reject the erroneous interpretations, which have been so long fastened upon the sacred records of our faith and hopes by ignorance, imposture, or bigotry, it becomes us to supply their place with such as are rational, consistent, and true. Let us not expose ourselves to the charge of having attempted to demolish a venerable pile, which, however dark and gloomy and uncomfortable, has served for shelter to many generations, without having provided another instead of it, which, at the same time that it is better lighted, more cheerful, of more majestic grandeur and simplicity, of more beautiful proportion and symmetry, is erected upon a surer foundation, and will afford equal security and shelter to all, who shall flee to it for refuge. According to the opportunities, the ability and the grace that may be given to each of us, let us, my brethren, faithfully contribute our proportion of thought and exertion, of providence, and cooperation to promote in the generation, that is coming forward to take our place, a pure faith, an enlightened piety, enlarged views, a catholic spirit, unspotted manners, a life of active virtue, of practical godliness. And however limited the effect of our labours may be, let it appear, when we are gone, that what we did effect was in aid and not in hindrance of the best of causes,—the advancement of christian knowledge and piety, the promotion of human improvement and salvation.

FAMILIARITY WITH SCRIPTURE.

Paradoxical as it may seem, our very familiarity with scripture, and the frequency with which we read it, is one of the principal reasons, why we do not understand it any better. The Bible is put into our hands, as soon as we can read; it is used as a class-book in our schools, (we cannot but think injudiciously,) and is read continually in families, at least in those that make any pretensions to religion. The consequence is, that we become familiar with the phraseology of scripture long before we have

attained an age, when it is to be expected, that we should read any book understandingly. Our first knowledge of scripture, therefore, is merely a knowledge *by rote*—an acquaintance with the words without any apprehension of their meaning, or any regard to their meaning. Of course when these words recur to us, afterwards, they suggest no ideas, having never been associated with any in our minds.

I know, that when we are familiar with the language of any book, we are very apt to suppose, that we are equally familiar with its meaning; but this by no means necessarily follows. On the contrary, our familiarity with the language and phraseology of a book often leads us to overlook its meaning. For when we read a book for the first time, the very circumstance, that the language is *not* familiar, compels us to pay an attention to the reading of it, which makes it impossible, that we should not keep up, in some degree at least, the train of thought. But when we have become familiar with the language of the book, this attention is not necessary and is not paid. The language suggests itself mechanically, and the ideas are but little thought of. This is the way in which the Bible is too often read; so that I am persuaded, if we were not so familiar with its language, or, in other words, if the reading of it were not so easy to us, we should read it more understandingly, and to greater profit.

A little observation must convince every one, that men's real knowledge of scripture is not in proportion to their acquaintance with its phraseology. How often do we meet with persons, whose heads are full of texts of scripture, who are continually applying these texts,—applying them, too, commonly, with correctness, and sometimes with great appositeness, who yet do not consider the meaning of the texts they thus use, and much less the general scope of the passages in which they are found? They use these familiar texts, just as we hear men use familiar expressions in common conversation—expressions of courtesy and general regard—without considering their meaning, at the time, or even knowing what they mean, but only knowing that they mean *something*, and that they are expressions, which custom has made it proper to introduce on such and such occasions. I am confident, that those, who are the readiest to quote scripture, are not always the wisest to understand it. Their knowledge of scripture extends to the language of scripture, but no further, and no deeper.

The preceding remarks lay open the true cause, why so many well-disposed christians regularly read their chapter in the Bible, and can perhaps repeat it afterwards from memory, without, however, having a single idea pass through their minds during

the whole process. It is all done by rote. And if the very same chapter were subsequently read to them by another person in a pointed and forcible manner, it would seem to them as altogether new; and if they were themselves to read it in another translation, though conveying precisely the same ideas, it would sound to them as another gospel. So much are men carried away by words.

Here, too, we find the reasons, why men who change their opinions from those in which they had been educated, commonly boast of having their eyes opened to understand the scriptures, thitherto a sealed book to them. The fact is simply this. In consequence of changing their opinions they are led to think, and discriminate, and search the scriptures with a view to support the opinions, which they have just adopted; and in reading the Bible, therefore, they do make it a point to affix *some* meaning to what they read, right or wrong, which is more than they ever did before, and they, therefore, call it—having their eyes opened to understand the scriptures.

From what has been said, and from what might be said under this head, I am convinced that much of the vagueness and confusion in the minds of men respecting the real import of scripture is owing to the frequency with which they read it, and to their familiarity with its peculiar phraseology: and if it could be so, that a man should never see a Bible until he was twenty years old, and then come to the reading of it without any notion of its contents, and, therefore, without any prepossessions, I do firmly believe, that from one careful perusal of it he would acquire a clearer and better understanding of the book, than is usually attained at that age, though the book may have been read, at least the most important parts of it, several times. Let me not, however, be understood to object against a frequent reading of the Scriptures, or against their being put very early into the hands of children. Many very important benefits result from this, I know, far more than sufficient to counterbalance any evils, that may grow out of it. But I do wish that Christians may be apprised of the danger there is, that their very familiarity with the language of scripture, may lead them to read it without any regard to its sense and meaning.

WHAT IS THE CHARACTER OF THE METHODISTS CAMP-MEETINGS, AND HOW DO YOU ACCOUNT FOR THE EFFECTS THERE PRODUCED?

Among the peculiar regulations, which have been adopted by the methodists, for keeping alive and propagating their faith, we

may consider their practice of field-preaching as one of the most efficient, as well as most characteristic. It was resorted to by the first founders of the sect; and became in their hands a powerful engine for producing that vast religious movement, which they effected. Their excesses in devotion, and extravagances with regard to the new birth, had excluded them from preaching in the regular churches. This circumstance, as well as the immense multitudes, that flocked to hear them, more numerous than any church could contain, first compelled them to take the field. Such is the origin of the Methodists' camp-meetings; and though commenced from necessity, they were afterwards continued as means for producing revivals, and became, at length, an important part of their system.

The effects which are produced at these meetings form one of the most remarkable traits of methodism, and are worthy to be carefully examined as curious phenomena illustrating interesting principles of our nature. The first founders of this sect were not only enthusiasts themselves, but the cause of still greater enthusiasm in others. They produced upon susceptible subjects a physical affection or bodily disease, peculiar, and highly infectious; which, both by those who excited and those who experienced it, was believed to be part of the process of regeneration, and, therefore, the work of God. The first subjects, having no example to encourage them, naturally suppressed their feelings, as much as they could; they fell, however, into convulsive motions, and could not refrain from uttering cries. These extravagances at first gave offence, and occasioned some dispute in the Society; but being, at length, unanimously declared to be the work of grace, the people were led to throw off all restraint, and to abandon themselves without reserve to their mixed sensations. The consequences were such as might have been anticipated. Scenes of the wildest vociferation and fanatacism frequently ensued, and the voice of the preacher was sometimes lost amid the groans and shrieks of his suffering and raving auditors; while the ground was strewed with bodies in a state of convulsion or insensibility. 'While preaching at Bristol,' says Wesley, 'some of the brethren present called upon God to confirm his word. Suddenly, a young man sunk to the ground, trembling exceedingly at the presence of his power. Others cried out with a loud and bitter cry. One, and another, and another were struck to the earth. They dropped on every side as thunderstruck.' On another occasion he says 'the Lord made bare his arm. Some fell down, and there remained no strength in them; others exceedingly trembled and quaked. Some were torn with convulsions, so violently that several men

could scarcely hold one of them. Thousands cried out; there was shrieking in every part of the congregation.' 'The Holy Ghost enabled me to speak so,' says Mr. Whitefield, 'that several women were thrown into strong convulsions. A quaker, who was present at one of these meetings, and inveighed against what he called the dissimulation of these creatures, caught the contagious emotion, and while he was biting his lips and knitting his brows, and doing his utmost to stifle and conceal his feelings, dropt down as if struck by lightning.' These are some of the first cases of Methodism.

Modern camp-meetings are usually held for several days together. Tents are erected, and the people remain on the ground, day and night, during the whole time of their continuance. Great numbers are supposed to be converted on these occasions; and the supposed process of regeneration is nearly the same in almost every instance. To use their own language, the person is seized with sudden and sharp convictions of sin, with an alarming sense of his lost and undone condition. This state of mind continues for a short time, when, all at once, a ray of heavenly hope darts comfort into his soul; he feels an assurance, that his sins are pardoned, and cries and groans are exchanged for shouts of joy, and songs of praise for deliverance. More violent cases frequently occur, especially in the southern and western parts of our country. People are thrown into convulsions, and fall down in a state of insensibility, and all the extravagances, which characterized the first æra of methodism, are annually repeated. In the New-York Methodists' Magazine, we have the following account of a camp-meeting at Nashville, Tennessee.

'The tents were hardly erected before the power of God began to be manifest. There was a great cry for mercy. The altar was filled with mourners the first evening. None of them obtained relief, however. The children came to the birth, but there was not strength to bring forth. At the next morning exercises several struggled into liberty. A young man received an uncommon blessing. The love of God was so powerfully shed abroad in his soul, that he could not repress his feelings. He went through the grounds shouting with all possible energy; and as soon as the first gust of praise was over, he broke out into vollies of exhortation. Convictions and conversions were now almost perpetual. Jehovah himself seemed to be in the camp. The people fell before the word like corn before a storm of wind, and rose from the dust with divine glory shining in their countenances. Nothing was heard but the groans of the wounded, and the rapturous shouts of young converts. It was a glorious time. Hundreds of all ages and colours were stretched on

the ground in the agonies of conviction; and though thousands, day and night, were crowding around them, and passing to and fro, yet nobody was hurt; which shows that there was nothing like *confusion* or *disorder*, and that the people were *perfectly in their senses.* It was computed, that two hundred and fifty-one souls were converted from nature to grace on this occasion.'

It should be observed in justice to the Methodists, that the more enlightened of the sect disapprove of these tumultuous proceedings; and begin to suspect, that a little strange fire is sometimes mingled with the holy flame, that is kindled within their altars. They, therefore, lend their influence to regulate and restrain within the bounds of decency, what they still believe to be, in the main, the work of God. The preachers, however, protest against this innovation, and insist that they should 'let the Lord work in his own way.' They relate instances, where an undue suppression of the feelings has produced effects nearly fatal; and, indeed, it is a well known fact, that blood-vessels have been ruptured, and dangerous bleedings produced, by a strong and continued effort to restrain emotions, which are excited on these occasions.

Such are some of the phenomena which occur at camp-meetings. They were, at first, variously accounted for, as proceeding from imposture, from the agency of evil spirits, or from the perceptible influence of the Holy Ghost. Wesley referred all the cases without exception to the two last named causes; though he was somewhat perplexed to determine how far, or in what particular instances, either was most operative. It seems to have been his opinion, on the whole, that both agents were concerned in the affair, and entered more or less into every case. 'For,' says he, 'when a strong man armed keepeth his house, his goods are in peace, till a stronger attempt to dislodge him; he then makes desperate resistance, and in the struggle which ensues, the fortress is sometimes almost demolished, before it can be gained.' Satan was, moreover, charged by Wesley with attempting to bring discredit on the work. Like the Egyptian magicians, he did the same things with his *enchantments;* thus counterfeiting and disparaging the operations of the spirit. The more extravagant among his followers do not consider these effects to be of so mixed a character. The wildest scenes of frenzy and fanaticism have been confidently appealed to, as indubitable proofs of divine agency. They are 'outpourings of the spirit,' 'times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.' It is in vain to tell them, that the first preaching of the gospel was never accompanied with these extravagances; that the author of our religion always spoke and acted in a calm and dignified

manner; that he did not cry and strive, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street; that we no where read, that the first converts were thrown into convulsions; that Cornelius 'fell down' and 'shrieked' and 'gnashed his teeth,' and 'tore his hair,' and 'remained as one dead,' under the force of St. Peter's oratory; or that the Proconsul Sergius did so, when Paul was preaching before him; or that the apostle himself, agitated as he reasonably might have been, in discovering by a terrific miracle that he was opposing, not an impostor, as he imagined, but the followers of the promised Messiah, ever went through any of those violent and mystical transitions of feeling, which would have entitled his case to be considered a clear and satisfactory conversion at a camp-meeting.—To all such arguments they reply by referring to our Saviour's practice of frequently addressing his hearers in the open air, by which, they think, he showed an evident predilection for field-preaching; and they quote, with an air of triumph, the scene which occurred at the day of Pentecost, as being in all its circumstances, an undoubted example of primitive camp-meetings.

The simple detail, which we have given of a few of the cases, which occur on these occasions, is sufficient to suggest their *real* cause. We recognize, at once, the influence of strong passions upon weak minds and disordered fancies, augmented by sympathy, and propagated by means both of voluntary and involuntary imitation. That these principles alone are adequate to account for phenomena as extraordinary as any we are now considering, is evident from many analogous effects, where these are known to have been the sole and undoubted cause. Many painful disorders, which have refused to yield to the most powerful medical agents, have been removed by merely exciting the imagination of the patient; and various anomalous sensations, actual fainting, and even the most violent of hysterical and epileptic affections have been induced by influencing the same faculty. A thousand facts illustrate this truth, but none more strikingly than the history of Animal Magnetism. Mesmer and Wesley produced effects remarkably similar. The *crisis*, as it was called in Animal Magnetism, corresponds to the *new birth* in Methodism, and was characterised by nearly the same symptoms. There were the same sighings and sobbings, faintings and convulsions in both. Both diseases, too, were equally contagious. When one fell into the crisis in either, a great number of others were immediately affected. In both instances, likewise, the poor and ignorant chiefly were affected, while those who were able to observe and describe their sensations felt nothing. Now the phenomena of Magnetism, great and surprising as they were, proved to be re-

ferable, solely, to the imaginations of the persons magnetized. No fact in physiology, indeed, is now more clearly demonstrated, or better understood than this, that the imagination alone, as a cause, is capable of producing great and extraordinary changes in the human constitution. Admiting this, then, as an established principle of our nature, and making due allowance for exaggerated accounts and real imposture, we are furnished with data for explaining all the anomalous phenomena in question.

We would remark, in the first place, that the subjects of this work are mostly young people and chiefly females, persons of strong feelings, and but little acquainted with human nature. It is certainly rather a suspicious circumstance of Methodism, that its converts are taken, for the most part, from a class of people who would be least likely to suspect or detect a delusion, supposing there were one, and the most likely to be carried away with it.—Then the peculiar doctrines of the Methodists, and their powerful way of urging and enforcing them furnish, we think, a sufficient *exciting cause.* It is a principle with them to terrify those, whom they hope to convert, to fill them with the utmost consternation about the state of their souls, to drive them to the very brink of despair, and throw them into a crisis of horror and agony, out of which they emerge 'new creatures.' In order to effect this, they select the most alarming topics. Our hopeless condition by nature, the necessity of regeneration, the all-sufficiency of grace, are the powerful themes, upon which they harangue, rudely and incoherently, it is true, but earnestly and vehemently, with fervid zeal and passionate sincerity, and forever recurring to the same topics. They preach damnation to all unbelievers. They unveil the horrors of the invisible world, and pour forth glowing descriptions of death, and hell, and judgment. They represent God, out of Christ, as a consuming fire. But the Saviour they describe as tender and compassionate, ready to snatch them as brands from the burning. They make the most searching and personal appeals. 'Thou art the man' often introduces the application of a discourse, full of the most tremendous denunciations. They address the conscience, the imagination, and all the mainsprings of the human mind. They feel and express an honest and anxious concern for the salvation of souls. They melt into tears at the insensibility of sinners to their own danger; and they sometimes actually sink down, exhausted by the strength of their own emotions. All this, accompanied with a loud tone of voice, vehement gestures, wild looks, must strongly operate on susceptible minds. And when a human being is taught to believe that his internal feelings are the monitions of God, and the strivings of his holy spirit, it is impossible to say, into what extravagancies he may be carried.

When the preachers perceive, that they have made an impression, they invite all who are 'in a seeking way' to come into the altar, which is a fenced inclosure, about forty feet square in front of the stage. There are, usually, two of these, one for the men and another for the women, into which none are permitted to enter, but such as are expressly desirous to have their souls converted. Here they are made to kneel down. The preachers and other experienced persons go in among them, and pray with them and over them. They exhort them not to reject the gracious invitations of the Saviour, nor stifle the operations of his spirit. They address them in the most enthusiastic language in order to keep them earnestly expecting a change, and swell the tide of feeling to the highest pitch. Violent emotions must from their nature be transient. Our feelings can never be long kept in a high state of tension. They come to a crisis, and then subside. The sinner, under conviction, works himself into the most horrible fears, terrors, and agonies, till the mind by a natural reaction, makes an effort to throw off its sorrows; and he feels relief. This he eagerly seizes upon as a token that his sins are forgiven; and his imagination now practices the same illusion in exalting him to the most rapturous confidence and joy, as it did before in sinking him to the depths of despair. Indeed, when we attempt to judge of the state of our hearts by our inward sensations, or by any other rule than our general conduct, we are constantly liable to self-deception, for we shall almost always be sure to find there, whatever we greatly desire, or confidently hope.

When the work is once begun upon weak or susceptible subjects, sympathy, example, the principle of imitation, will account for its rapid progress among persons of every variety of constitution and temperament. The contagious nature of strong emotions, excited in large assemblies, is well known. This is exemplified in the enthusiasm of theatres, and of armies, and in the uncontrollable fury of mobs. In this situation the very looks are contagious, the fury flies from face to face. Persons of sane mind and sober judgment, placed amid scenes of general excitement, have felt emotions which would easily enable them to understand the madness, which prevailed among others of a more excitable temperament. But to trace the principle to a closer analogy to our subject. All nervous and convulsive affections are liable to propagate themselves among those who witness them, and thus to become, as it were, epidemic. The bare sight of a person in a fit has thrown others into the same convulsions. Disorders of this nature, obtaining at first in a private way, have spread through whole districts, through large schools, and facto-

ries in a most distressing manner, and were checked only by a complete separation of the individuals, or by exciting strong counteracting impressions on the mind.*

The principle of involuntary imitation is one of the most curious parts of our nature, and is wonderfully illustrated by the facts under consideration. When one is struck under convictions, others are immediately affected, and a few solitary cries will be followed, at once, by shrieks and groans throughout the assembly. An explosion of enthusiasm from the altar, will be instantly felt in every part of the field; and has been known to extend its effects with inconceivable rapidity through whole states and territories.—The inexpressible joy of young converts, and their way of exhorting and telling experiences has something in it infinitely affecting, and does as much, perhaps, as any thing else, to spread the contagion.—What may be our condition in a future life is a subject in which every heart, at times, must feel an awful and thrilling interest; and almost every one is conscious, that *some* change is necessary in order to be prepared for this state. Many believing it to be a sort of mysterious operation, are anxious to pass through the requisite process, that they may enjoy those happy hopes and assurances, which they see many of their friends to have arrived at.—In some few instances, too, there is no doubt a mixture of dissimulation. These exstacies become fashionable. They attract notice, and are thought to be creditable, as implying susceptibility to religious impressions. It might be expected, therefore, that some would pretend to feel, what they did not; and imitate the cries and convulsions of those, who are really affected.—We have reason to believe, also, that fraud and collusion are sometimes practiced, in getting up these exhibitions. It is honourable in a field-preacher, to produce such effects. They are regarded as seals of his ministry, proofs of the divinity of his call; and so strange are the contrarieties of our nature, and so natural the connection between fraud and fanaticism that we have faith to believe, that he may, sometimes conscientiously make use of a pious imposture to help forward, what he still sincerely thinks to be the work of God. From

* A curious fact of this nature happened, a few years ago, in one of the northern parishes of Scotland. A woman, who had for some time been subject to fits, was once seized at church in quite an alarming manner. The disease was soon communicated to others, and always took them at church, so that on a sacramental occasion fifty or sixty females were sometimes carried out in a state of insensibility. That this was purely the effect of sympathy, is evident from the manner, in which it was cured. A rough fellow of a kirk officer being frequently obliged to carry out the same woman, grew impatient, at length, and threw her into a ditch. The woman never had the disease afterwards, and the dread of similar treatment in others prevented its further progress. Here we recognize the influence of moral causes, in removing, as well as inducing, convulsive maladies.

imposture, however, most of the cases can be satisfactorily vindicated. Their reality has often been attested by competent witnesses. They have happened to persons, whose sincerity is above suspicion. Some who suspected deceit, and came to scrutinize or oppose, have been converted, and the methodists themselves are not unfrequently surprized to find 'Saul among the prophets.'

Religion, among the methodists, is made a thing of sensation and passion; and is, of course, continually craving stimulants and sympathy. Their love grows cold, their faith expires, unless excited and resuscitated from time to time by these public occasions. Camp meetings may, therefore, be said to be almost essential to the very existence of the sect; and it must be confessed that they answer their purpose admirably, whether employed to make new converts, or to rekindle the zeal and *esprit du corps* of the old. It has been principally owing to the annual return of these seasons, together with intermediate love-feasts, and quarterly meetings, and watch-nights, that the methodists, as a body, have been able to effect such wonders, and that they still present an organization more powerful than any other which the world has yet known for extending its influence among 'the million.' Upon the methodists as individuals, or as a sect, we have no intention to cast the slightest odium by what has been said. We certainly do not question their title to the christian name, nor suspect their sincerity and piety, any more than we do those of other denominations. But we have wished to show, that the surprizing effects, which they have sometimes produced, are all capable of being philosophically explained; that they may all be referred to natural causes, and do not suppose in any case the peculiar or miraculous agency of God.

ON FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE.

The great variety of opinions on subjects of Religion, which prevails amongst those who profess to make the same books the guide of their faith, has been the cause of solicitude and perplexity to many good men. By some, who are in the habit of forming their judgments from superficial appearances rather than from careful and accurate enquiry, this diversity of sentiment amongst Christians has been thought to throw discredit on divine revelation. If God had really spoken from heaven to men, they say, he would have spoken in such a manner as not to be misunderstood by any whom it concerned to understand what was spo-

ken. A little reflection might suggest to such reasoners, that to prevent a revelation from being misunderstood, would have required a perpetual series of miracles. It would have required, in the first place, a vast improvement in language, as the instrument by which truth is conveyed to the mind. Revelation must have been made by some other vehicle than human language, or it must be liable to be partially understood in consequence of the imperfections of which human language is full. It would have required, in the second place, an entire removal of all imperfections of knowledge or character, all errors, prejudices, and passions from the minds of those, to whom it was addressed. It would have required a constant operation of the Deity upon the mind, which would render any revelation unnecessary, or superfluous, and would have left no room for the exercise of the will in the acquisition of truth —no room for the exercise of humility, candour, diligence, impartiality and perseverance. They who think such a state of things neither to be expected from God, nor to be desired by man—they who understand best the nature of language and the nature of the human mind, will be least surprised at the variety of opinions which have been extracted from the same writings, and least disposed to urge the circumstance as an objection to revelation. *They* would think it strange, if the doctrines of religion and revelation were *not* tinctured by the muddy channels, through which they must necessarily pass.

Should it be asked, how it has happened that other writings of antiquity have not given rise to a similar variety of opinions and doctrines, the answer is, first, that these writings have not been perused by high and low, learned and unlearned, with a view to gain a knowledge of the *opinions*, or *doctrines* of the writers. Neither the temporal, nor eternal interest of men has been supposed to be affected by the reception of this, or that doctrine from a heathen writer. Had the popular writings of antiquity been read by all classes of men for the same purpose, and with the same views, as the sacred writings, undoubtedly they would have given rise to a similar variety of contradictory systems. Enough of literary controversy exists to authorize such a conclusion.

There are, no doubt, difficulties peculiar to the scriptures ; many parts of them were occasional, and not studied compositions, written by uneducated men, careless of expressing themselves with precision and accuracy. The religion, manners, and customs of the Jews were also very peculiar, and gave rise to many very uncommon expressions and figures.

It is also true, that more good sense and juster rules of interpretation have been applied to profane, than to the sacred wri-

ters. It has not been thought unlawful to exercise a little *reason* upon them. *Mystery* loses half its charms when found in a heathen writer. The natural man has been thought competent to understand all ancient writing, but the Bible, by the help of study and learning; and the first obvious and literal meaning of words has not been held so sacred—so clearly the mind of the writer, as that a departure from it should be branded as a wresting of scripture, or an exultation of reason over revelation.

One of the principal sources of the various doctrines, which have been drawn from the scriptures, is the figurative language in which they abound. We shall now offer some remarks on the causes of the obscurity and ambiguity of figurative language, that will account for the *various* interpretations of it which have prevailed, and demonstrate the necessity of study, and attention to a great variety of considerations in order to ascertain when language is intended to be figurative and when literal, and to determine the true meaning of that which is acknowledged to be figurative, and suggest some principles and considerations respecting interpretation, which may be deduced from the causes of uncertainty and ambiguity.

A slight attention to the general nature of figurative language might lead us to expect great uncertainty in regard to the extent of its meaning. Words or sentences, which in their literal, or primary sense, are the signs of certain ideas or things, are used to express others entirely different, on account of some real or supposed resemblance or analogy in the things denoted by the primary meaning of the words, to those intended to be expressed by the use of the figurative expression. For the purpose of giving pleasure to the imagination, or of producing a deep impression upon the mind, or of assisting the apprehension or memory, that which is hard to be understood is, by means of figurative language, connected with something familiar and well understood; that which is indifferent, or painful—which the mind dislikes to contemplate with something which is highly agreeable, and which it can dwell upon with pleasure; and that which cannot, with something which can produce emotion. This connection is effected most frequently by the relation of resemblance, often by other relations, and, sometimes, by some accidental association.

From this view of the nature of figurative language, it is obvious that, though it may be highly useful for practical purposes, it is attended with the almost necessary evil of giving rise to errors and difficulties; and we are not surprised that men distinguished for their ardent love and pursuit of the truth, have denounced all figurative expressions, as an abuse of language—an obstacle in their way. We are not indeed of their opinion, be-

cause we think it better that truth, mixed with a little error, should be made to influence the hearts and lives of men, than that truth, pure, cold, and abstract, should enter unwilling ears, or remain neglected in dusty volumes. Whatever opinion, however, we may form of the utility or propriety of the use of figurative language, one thing is certain, it already abounds in all books, and particularly in that which we are most concerned to understand aright, the Bible. And instead of wasting time in making unavailing complaints, we ought to do our best to understand the causes of obscurity and ambiguity in this mode of communicating truth, and deduce good principles and rules of interpretation from the consideration of them.

In general the difficulty in the interpretation of language, by which different things are compared together, and included under the same terms, is, to determine with precision the circumstances of resemblance, the kind and degree of correspondence, or, in general, the nearness or remoteness of the relation, which a writer may intend, between the accessory ideas, which the words in their primary sense suggest, and the naked idea, or truth designed to be expressed. The causes of this difficulty are various.

1. Our knowledge of the subject, its attributes and circumstances, the *proper* signs of which are borrowed to express a meaning different from their literal and customary meaning, may be more limited, or more extensive, than that of the writer. There is even a probability, that such will be the case in regard to a writer of remote antiquity. Something, of which we are ignorant, but known by him to belong to the subject, may have led to the selection of the figure. In this case, we may be ignorant of the very circumstance, which was the foundation of the figurative expression. Or the reverse of this may be the case. The knowledge of the subject in the reader may be greater than that of the writer; and he may imagine, that the allusion was to something comprehended, indeed, in his knowledge of the subject, but of which the writer knew nothing.

2. Many objects, in addition to the attributes and qualities, which may properly be said to belong to them, acquire a new character from qualities accidentally associated with them. Religious opinion, ancient custom, national pride or prejudice may have invested things, indifferent in themselves, with a peculiar and highly interesting character, so as to make them the subjects of frequent allusion. Now associations of this kind are in their nature local and temporary. They are too delicate and arbitrary to bear transmission from age to age, or from nation to nation. But the force and meaning of figurative expressions, borrowed from these objects, may depend entirely on the asso-

ciated qualities, i. e. some one of the associated qualities may have been the foundation of the figure. For instance, the pleasure felt in observing fraternal affection, is compared to that of seeing ointment running down Aaron's beard to the skirts of his garments; and was no doubt a happy comparison in the time of the writer, when anointing with oil was a religious ceremony, and used in the induction of a king to his office. If we neglect to make ourselves acquainted with the factitious character, this and similar things had acquired, i. e. with the notions of the Jews respecting them, we shall be liable, it is evident, to perpetual mistakes in attempting to assign the meaning of the figurative expressions in the Bible. The words alone do not intimate to us the peculiar associations on which the force, and propriety, and beauty of the figure depend.—It has been common, in every language, to express mind and its attributes by language borrowed from body and its attributes. The part supposed to be the seat of the understanding, has been used for the understanding itself, and the supposed seat of the affections for the affections themselves. By some the heart has been used to denote the understanding; by others the affections: by others both.* Hardness of heart, then, may denote moral depravity or mental, incapacity, and which is the true meaning cannot be determined by the consideration of the words alone. We must know something of the opinions of the age and nation. Pingue ingenium amongst the Romans denoted stupidity of intellect; but would not the English reader, if he attended to the words alone, take the meaning to be 'fertility of genius.'

3. Another cause of the uncertainty or ambiguity of figurative language, is the influence of custom, or present use, in deter-

* Amongst the Jews לֵב and καρδια, denoting primarily the animal heart, were used to express the understanding, as well as the affections and desires: and our common version, by continually rendering them by the English word 'heart,' has caused much perplexity and error to the unlearned reader. The verse, Rom. x. 10, 'With the *heart* (instead of with the *mind*) man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation,' has filled many a good christian with doubts and solicitude in regard to the quality of his faith. In Eph. i. 18, according to the reading universally approved by modern editors of the New Testament, we have 'Πεφωτισμενους τους οφθαλμους της καρδιας ὑμων,' and if we should translate it, 'the eyes of your *heart* being enlightened, &c. the impropriety would not be more real, though rather more glaring, than in twenty other instances in which καρδια is so rendered. This striking instance of the use of the word καρδια to denote the understanding, may convince any reader, that the word 'mind,' or 'understanding,' may be substituted for 'heart' in our old version, whenever the sense requires it.

We might mention a hundred other instances of mistranslation in the common version, which, though they may suggest the true meaning to the scholar who recollects the original, are a source of error and perplexity to the uninformed reader, and, therefore, make it the duty of all, who value the word of God, to use their exertions to obtain a revision of our present translation.

mining the extent of its signification. Many words and phrases, which were once in the highest degree figurative, have by use lost their emphasis and force; and even have entirely lost their literal meaning. They have lost the power of suggesting the ideas they were originally used to denote, and have become, in relation to those who speak or hear them, the *proper* signs of other ideas. There may be no uncertainty in regard to the meaning of such language to persons belonging to the same age and country with the speaker or writer; but it is not so easy to determine what influence usage may have had in softening and limiting the force and meaning of figurative expressions used by writers separated from us by the interval of twenty or thirty centuries.* Some of the colloquial and proverbial forms of expression in our own language, if we consider only the original, literal meaning of the words, appear to contain a bold figure; and yet they suggest nothing but the figurative sense to one in ten thousand. It is but reasonable to suppose, that use and custom may have produced a similar effect on the language of antiquity; and if we neglect the means we have of discovering this usage, we are in danger of ascribing that to the imagination, or fanaticism of a writer, which is only the expression of a common thought, in the allowed and sober language of the times. The modern sceptick will open the Bible and sneer at such expressions, as 'He that *eateth* my flesh and *drinketh* my blood, shall have everlasting life,' 'He that *eateth* me shall live by me.' But let him attend to the fashion of the times, the language familiar to the people addressed, and he will find, that 'to eat a person,' was a figure not uncommon, meaning to receive and enjoy the benefits of which he is the occasion, whether resulting from his doctrines, his example, his labours, his life, or his death.† The language in which the predictions of our Saviour in the xxiv. and xxv. chapters of Matthew, may appear at first view, extravagant or unmeaning, but is justified by the usage of the Jewish prophets, and has a definite meaning.

4. Another cause of the uncertainty and ambiguity of figurative language is referable to the difference in the character of the minds of different persons. It is usually said, that figures owe their origin to poverty of language. Is not poverty of thought a

* If any one will take the trouble to look into Pliny's Letters, he will find a number of metaphors adduced by Pliny, as being of the boldest kind, which have now lost so much of their force and spirit by being received into common language, that we should hardly take them to be metaphors, unless we were told of it.

† R. Hillel dicit, non erit Israeli Messias, cum jam ipsum *comederint* tempore Hezekiae.

Futurum est, ut annos Messiae *comedant*.

Rev. x. 9, 'And he said unto me, take it (the little book) and *eat it up*.'

fertile source of their use on difficult abstract subjects, with which imagination ought to be have no concern? How many are there, for instance, who, having occasion to trace out the consequence of the admission of any particular principle, either from want of discernment, or from an indolent desire to avoid the close, laborious reflection requisite in order to perceive the precise, real consequences, which would follow, are fain to get out of the difficulty by having recourse to figurative language, by making use of the imagination, instead of the judgment? They will give utterance to some complex conception, in which they themselves perceive scarcely a glimpse of meaning distinct from the image. If we torture language of this kind, until we have extracted some consistent meaning which may be stated in plain language, we shall probably find a meaning which was never in the author's mind.

5. Figurative language is often used designedly by men of powerful minds for the purpose of producing effect on the unreflecting classes, without designing to convey any very definite meaning, or truth, which they would acknowledge in plain terms. They wish to produce excitement of a certain kind, to influence the conduct in a certain way, and for this purpose, they are not ignorant, that figures, like brevity

> ——————'are very good
> When we are, or are not understood.'

If we urge closely language of such a character, with a view to get a writer's *real opinions*, without making any allowance for exaggeration, overstatement, &c. what a medley of absurd and contradictory opinions should we impute to any author, whom we should serve in this manner?

6. On the supposition, that writer and reader have an equal knowledge of the subject, from which a figure is borrowed, and independently of the causes of uncertainty hitherto mentioned, every object may be presented to the mind under different aspects, attitudes, relations, according to the accidental direction of the attention, the character and habits of association of different minds, or the different temper and state of feeling of the same mind at different times. Sometimes one feature of the related subject, sometimes another will be selected as the foundation of the figurative expression by the mind, trying to disburden itself. It is not however, usually, deliberately selected. For the mind in the ardour of composition rarely stops to consider the related subject in its full extent; or to determine how many, or how few, how near, or how remote are the points of resemblance or agreement between the related subjects. It seizes upon some striking circumstance, some interesting feature, as the foundation of the

figurative expression, and as soon as the mind is eased of that thought, others rush in. Now different circumstances of the same object, as observed above, being more or less striking, according to the character of the mind, and the train of thought in the mind, it is evident that a figurative expression will be ambiguous, till we have attended to these circumstances. It is not safe trusting to first impressions in regard to it.

7. The last cause I shall mention of the ambiguity of figurative language, relates to its use, when employed to express or to excite any emotion or affection of the mind. We often meet with sentences of which the literal meaning cannot be true; nor is the language expressive of any proposition or truth, which can be stated in plain words. In regard to which we can only say that the whole sentence is significant of some emotion, or state of mind; or that it is an instrument by which a writer endeavours to awaken in the mind of another the same feelings that are in his own, by suggesting certain images. The verse: 'O that my head were waters, and mine eyes fountains of tears,' is an instance of the kind of sentences I have in view. St. Paul's exclamation; 'I could wish, that I were accursed,' &c. is another. Dr. Young is full of sentences of this kind, in which we should labour in vain to find, and in which he probably never meant we should find, any truth, any proposition, capable of being stated in plain language. Which sentences still have power to produce a tumult of emotions. There may be poetry in them; but if the author intended them for sense, he has failed entirely.

Similar to these are sentences, which though they are capable of expressing a proposition, neither unintelligible nor absurd, are yet used upon the impulse of feeling, without any regard to correctness of language or to literal truth. When a person is under the influence of strong feeling, the correctness of the language, or the thoughts in which his feelings find vent, is not at all considered. He uses words, which in their possible, or perhaps common signification, express a meaning, which he would immediately reject. Now, how far a person may be influenced by emotion to neglect literal truth, what is the degree of exaggeration, how far is such language to be considered hyperbolical, or how far expressive of a writer's real opinions, we cannot determine with correctness, without having recourse to many circumstances, foreign to the mere language, which he uses. Here, then, is a great source of ambiguity.

These are some of the principal causes of the uncertainty, and ambiguity of figurative language. The principles, and means, of interpretation are deduced so immediately from a consid-

eration of these causes of ambiguity, that little more than an enumeration remains to be attempted.

From each, and all of them, may be inferred this all-important, and leading principle in the interpretation of figurative language, viz. *That we should not exact too great a degree of correspondence—too close and minute a resemblance between the related subject from which the figure is borrowed, and the principal idea intended to be the subject of discourse; that we should be satisfied if we can assign with probability a single feature or circumstance in the related subject, which may have been the foundation of the figurative expression.* Disregard to this principal of interpretation has, it is believed, been the cause of more than half the mysteries with which the world has ever been troubled,

If this principle be admitted, the next question is, how may we ascertain with precision the particular circumstance or circumstances of resemblance between the accessory ideas suggested by the literal signification of the words, and the principal thing intended to be conveyed to the mind.

Le Clerc says, if the main subject, and the related subject which is the foundation of the figure, be very well known, we may suppose the writer to have made use of the language on account of the obvious resemblance, which we perceive in the two subjects, unless the connection of the discourse shew, that the writer had something peculiar in his mind.*

But will not this rule fail in very many instances? Not to mention, that we can rarely pronounce with certainty, that the knowledge of each of the subjects is the same to the writer and interpreter, it has been made to appear, from many considerations, that what appears to one person, at one time, a striking resemblance, may not appear so to another person, at another time.

The connexion of the discourse, or a consideration of the train of thought by which the language in question is preceded or followed, must be allowed to be of frequent and indispensible use in the interpretation of figurative language, and of all language; but if there be any reality in the causes of ambiguity, which I have mentioned, it is plain that many other considerations are necessary in order to come at the true meaning of a word or sentence.

I think, therefore, a more general answer must be given to the question, How we are to get the exact meaning of a figurative word or sentence; viz. that we should attend to all the considerations, which make it probable, that the author had one thing in his mind, rather than another.

* Art. Crit. vol. i. p. 180.

What these considerations are, we must learn by attending to the causes of ambiguity peculiar to figurative language, and those which are common to it with all language. They are immediately inferred from the causes of obscurity and ambiguity; and are to be defended by a reference to them. The principal, which occur to me, are these.

Besides the connection of the discourse, or the consideration of the train of thought by which the language in question is preceded or followed, we must attend to the character of the age and nation, with respect to their use of figures,—whether it was distinguished for boldness and freedom, or for exactness and correctness; the character intellectual and moral of the writer; how great a degee of correctness is to be expected from him; his peculiar style of expression; all the circumstances in which he was placed, but, particularly, those calculated to produce an immediate influence on his feelings, at the time of writing; the immediate purpose he wishes to accomplish, or the immediate effect he wishes to produce on the mind of the persons addressed; the character, opinions and prejudices, of the persons addressed; all that is known of the subject, concerning which the language is used, whether derived from the writer in other parts of his writings, or from other sources; and lastly the influence of usage on the force and meaning of figurative expressions, which is to be learned, for the most part, by an induction from the manner in which particular expressions are used by the writers of any particular age, or nation, in different parts of their writings, just as we ascertain the *proper* meaning of words by considering the manner in which they are used in different passages, and different authors.

These are the most important circumstances, which occur as necessary to be attended to in the interpretation, of figurative language. If they do not, in all cases, enable us to acquire a satisfactory explanation of a passage, a faithful attention to them will probably preserve us from essential mistakes. They will often lead us to reject some false interpretation, when they cannot help us to the true one. And this is of very great import ance. For the danger is, that, in the case of dark and doubtful passages, we may be led to adopt too hastily some possible meaning of a sentence, the discovery of which may be flattering to ingenuity or sagacity, without inquiring whether it be reconcileable with all the circumstances under which the sentence was spoken or written; and that in our zeal to avoid ignorance, we give too favourable a reception to errors.

DIVINE JUSTICE.

Though all christians agree in ascribing perfect justice to the Supreme Being, nothing can be more unlike than the views which they take of his moral character and government. To what purpose is it, that we thus concur in appropriating the same epithets to the deity, and in calling him by the same names, if we still differ, as widely as we well can, in our conceptions of what he is, and of what he does. We are persuaded that Christians will never be brought into any thing like a real conformity of faith, nor even a real sympathy in religious feeling, until they have more clear, settled and accordant conceptions of the moral attributes of God. The attributes of God, especially his moral perfections, are in religion, what axioms or first principles are in mathematics. Every thing is built upon them. If, therefore, we really agree in these, we may hope to agree in other things; but if we divide here, there is no reason to believe that we shall ever come together again.

It will be our object to throw some light on the justice of God considered in connexion with his other attributes, and his moral government of the world.

1. In the first place, we shall consider how divine justice limits and controls divine sovereignty. When we say, that 'With God all things are possible;' we mean, of course, to except such things as are impossible in their own natures; otherwise, what we say would be not only an absurdity, but a contradiction. When we say too, that God 'worketh every thing after the counsel of his own will,' we do not mean, that he does what he will, merely because he will, and without any possible reason why he should will thus rather than the contrary; for this would be, not only to make him an arbitrary being, but also to rob him of the distinctions of being a rational one. Again, if we say that God has a right to do with us as he pleases, because he is our creator, and we are his property, we do not indicate in this, perhaps, the true foundation of the divine right. Our being his creatures, and his property, may give him a power over us, but I do not perceive how it must, necessarily, give him a right over us: for to have a power over us, and a right over us, are two very different things. God's right over us is founded, as we conceive, in his moral perfections, and in the necessity there is, that we should be under the government and care of such a being, in order to our security and happiness. It is precisely analogous, as we conceive, to the right, which a parent has over his children, until they arrive at an age, when they can take care of themselves.

Since, then, God's right is founded in his moral perfections, it is clear, that he can do nothing in that right, that is contrary to these perfections, or to any one of them.

We see, therefore, that in the exercise of his power, God is as much limited and controlled by what justice requires, as any one of us. He is as much fixed and bound by the rules and principles of justice, as we can be, though not in the same way. It is true, he cannot be bound, as we are, by a law imposed by a superior, and guarded by penal sanctions; but in default of such a law, imposed by another, he is a law unto himself. His own attributes make it necessary, that he should act in such a manner as to do violence to none of them; so that it is just as impossible, that he should do what justice forbids, as that he should be unable to do what justice demands. In speaking of God, respect must be had, not to one of his attributes only, but to them all, and to his moral as well as to his natural perfections; for they all have an equal authority over his conduct, and bind him, as it were by a law, to pursue that particular course, in which they all meet and are satisfied. Those, therefore, do greatly err, who represent the sovereignty of God, as without any thing to limit and control it. Independent though he is of all other beings, he is not independent of himself; superior though he is to all other laws, he is not superior to the law of his own nature; and that law restricts and confines him to such a course of conduct as may be consistent with the most perfect justice and equity.

We have been the more particular on this point, because we often hear men speak in a very loose and unguarded manner on the subject of the divine sovereignty. We must not think to glorify God by ascribing to him a sovereignty absolutely free from all rule and restraint. No: but quite the contrary. The glory of God consists not in his sovereignty—not in his omnipotence—but in his moral perfections. Consider him divested of these perfections, and his omnipotence, his sovereignty, may remain, but his glory is gone. What, indeed, do we venerate, what do we adore, what do we worship in God? Not surely his power alone, tremendous as it is, for that might be as detestable, as it is tremendous; not surely his wisdom alone, for wonderful as that is, it might be as treacherous, as it is wonderful. But we worship his goodness, and mercy, and love—his justice, and faithfulness, and truth. We worship not the wisdom and the power, every where visible in the works of creation, and in the operations of Providence: but we worship the righteousness that presides over all in the calmness and silence of unapproachable majesty. We worship not the clouds and darkness, that are

round about him, but the justice and judgment, that are the habitation of his throne.

2. We are next to consider the bearing which God's justice must have on his mercy, placability, or disposition to forgive. It has been boldly said, that God cannot forgive sin *freely*, because his justice forbids it. It is argued thus: 'justice requires that sin should be punished. If, therefore, sin is not punished, justice is not done. But justice not done is injustice. Consequently God cannot forgive sin, until he has first punished it, either in the offender himself, or on some other person, so that a satisfaction is made, and 'his justice is vindicated.'

The error in this reasoning arises out of a mistake in not regarding some of the most obvious distinctions on this subject. There is a justice which *may* be done, and there is a justice which *ought* to be done. Now the rule, or law of righteousness requires that to be done, which justly *ought* to be done; but it does not require every thing to be done which justly *may* be done. We see, therefore, that though it may be doing nothing more than justice, for God to punish sinners, it by no means follows from this, that justice requires and obliges him to punish them.

Again; we are to consider that there is a justice, which we owe to others; and there is a justice, which others owe to us. Now, though justice requires us to render to others the justice which we owe to them, it by no means follows, that we are required to insist on the justice, which they owe to us; for we are to remember, that justice consists in rendering unto every one, what is *due to* him, but not in exacting all that is *due from* him. We see, therefore, that though justice must move God to give to his creatures all their rights, it does not require him to exact from them, in return, all his own rights; for with his own rights he may do as he pleases—either exacting or relinquishing them, and either punishing or forgiving every violation of them, as is most consistent with the purposes of his government.

It is true, we sometimes say that punishment is *due to* an offender. By this, however, we do not mean, that he has a right to it, which in justice cannot be denied him, for this would be absurd enough; but only, that the injured person has a *right over him* to take it if he pleases. It does not bind the injured person to inflict the punishment, but only the offender to submit, if it is inflicted. It gives the injured person a right; it lays him under no obligation, but leaves him at full liberty to exercise this right, or not, according to his pleasure. Though, therefore, it be true, that punishment is due to sinners, it does not follow that God's

justice, simply considered, obliges him to punish them, unless their punishment is necessary for some other consideration.*

But it may be said, that other considerations do require God to punish sinners;—that he owes it to himself, and to his government, either to punish them, or to insist on some satisfaction. If it be meant by his owing it to himself, that his own justice, simply considered, requires it, we have said enough already to expose and refute this idea. But, if it be only meant, as it sometimes is, that he owes it to himself to improve every opportunity to *display* his justice, as a glorious attribute of his character—we should remember, that his mercy is as real, and as glorious an attribute of his character, as his justice is, and he must, therefore, owe it as much to himself to improve every opportunity to display his mercy in forgiving, as his justice in punishing the wretched transgressor.

If, then, it be mentioned, in the last resort, that God owes it to his *government* to punish sinners—we readily admit, that, if the objects of his government cannot be accomplished in any other way, he does, but if they can be, he does not. Now, what are the objects of God's government?—To make men holy and happy. Let sinners, therefore, sincerely repent, and be thoroughly reformed, and we would ask, whether the objects of God's government are not thus completely accomplished without his punishing them? And, if so, where is the necessity of his punishing them? Where is his obligation to punish them? We see, therefore, that God's justice presents no obstacles in the way of his freely pardoning *all such as repent and reform*, without his requiring any satisfaction for the sins, they may have previously committed.

Then in what beautiful harmony with his character, and with his just and righteous administration, is the promise of scripture: 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.' We should beware lest in our attempt to exalt God's justice, we lower and degrade his whole character; lest in attempting to make him an object of greater awe and fear, we take away every thing that is amiable and attractive in his character. This would be to strike a deadly blow at the very heart of vital religion. Take from the character of God every thing that is amiable and attractive, and you may fear him, but you cannot love him. Make him an arbitrary, relentless and inexorable being, the mere creature of a stern unfeeling justice, judging his subjects by the rigid letter of a rigid law, dead to every thing like

* Several of the preceding statements may be found urged with great power by Emlyn, and Henry Taylor.

pity, compassion, or tenderness, whom no tears, no prayers, no repentance can move—make your God, such a God, and you cannot love him. It is against your nature to love such a being. You cannot force your nature to love him. You might fear him and you would have occasion to fear him. You might worship him, and call him good, and great, and merciful, hoping, perhaps, by compliment and flattery to propitiate a being, who had no ear for the cry of humble supplication. But love him you could not; nor could you have a particle of that religion, which springs from love.

3. We have now considered God's justice as it respects his sovereignty and his placability, and we have now to consider it in but one more relation, namely, as it respects his punishment of impenitent transgressors. We have already shown it to be perfectly consistent with his justice to forgive *penitent* offenders, and we presume no one will call in question his right to punish such as are *impenitent*. Nay, he not only has a right, but he seems to be under a sort of necessity and obligation to do so. As our moral governor God cannot be *indifferent* to our moral conduct; for, if he were thus indifferent, he would cease, of course, to be our moral governor. Again; as he must also desire, from his very nature, the general good of his moral creation, he cannot fail to punish wilful and impenitent offenders, since the general good of his moral creation requires, that such offenders should be so restrained. Neither is there any thing arbitrary, or revengeful in this. It is simply doing, what justice not only permits, but even requires. For, if one part of mankind exert themselves to please God, and the other part make no effort to do this, it is plain, that justice requires him to make a distinction between them—to regard them very differently, and reward them very differently, or he would not render to every one his due; in doing which, we have seen, that justice consists. Indeed, so far is God from being arbitrary and revengeful in the punishment of the guilty, that his benevolence appears as much in this, as in the bestowment of his greatest blessings. Yes, it is a part of his benevolence to punish the guilty; since he cannot but perceive, that the improvement and happiness of his creatures must depend upon his causing vice to appear odious and abhorrent in their eyes; and this he can only do, by connecting with it the most painful consequences, and by making it to bear the strongest marks of his displeasure.

The justice of God should also lead us to expect, that the punishment of impenitent trangressors will be continued into the next world. Death produces a change in the manner of our existence, but it produces no change in our moral characters. At

the day of judgment, our moral characters will be as different, as at the day of our death. The same justice, therefore, that requires our condition in this world to be different, according to our characters, will also require that our condition in the next world should be different, according to our characters. We do not deny, that sin is punished in this life, and punished severely. Still, however, he who should pretend, that there is a perfect retribution here,—that men are happy or miserable exactly in proportion as they are virtuous or vicious, must be strangely misinformed, not only of the actual distribution of good and evil in this world, but also of the design apparent in this distribution; every thing like a perfect and complete retribution being purposely avoided; for, otherwise, this world would not be what it is, and what it was intended to be, namely, *a state of trial.* In short, it is idle to pretend, that sin is punished here, as much as divine justice requires; for from its very nature, it is not, and it cannot be punished, as much as divine justice requires, unless it is all punished away. Let us then learn to look upon God's judgments inflicted on transgressors in the present life, upon the painful effects of sin, which we feel now, as well as upon the terrible forebodings of the guilty mind, as furnishing us with but an awful presage of what awaits the hardened and impenitent sinner hereafter; at that dreadful day, when a perfect retribution will be executed, at last, on all the workers of iniquity, and 'He that made them will not have mercy on them, and He that formed them will show them no favour.'

From what has been said, we perceive how much we have to *hope*, and how much to *fear*, from the justice of God. We have reason to hope, because we know that his are the principles of an impartial and equitable administration; because we know that God will punish us only for those sins which we commit ourselves, and which we might have avoided; and because he will consider, in each case, how far our trangressions are to be imputed to mere weakness, how far to mere indiscretion, how far to a want of resolution, and how far to the unavoidable difficulties of our situation. All these circumstances are known unto God, and we may repose the utmost confidence in his justice, that he will give to each and all of them their due weight in making up his final decision as to our desert. And, finally, we have reason to fear, because we know we have made ourselves obnoxious to God's just displeasure; because we know, that his almighty power is at the call of his justice to enforce order throughout his boundless dominions; and because we know, that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, are threatened against every soul that doth evil. 'This is the purpose that is purposed upon the

whole earth, and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. The Lord of Hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?"

DISCREPANCIES IN THE ACCOUNTS OF THE RESURRECTION.

It is thought necessary, when in the common concerns of life we propose to obtain the truth of facts from testimony, to take into view the circumstances of the witnesses; and be governed by such a view, in forming an estimate of the value of their evidence. In such cases we pay a proper regard to the common laws of our nature. If the event, the knowledge of which we are endeavouring to acquire, be astonishing or complex, we make an allowance for the propensity to exaggerate on the one hand, and the exposure to perplexity, misapprehension or inconsistency on the other. If it be of a character to produce a deep and overwhelming excitement, we acknowledge the almost necessary connexion between such a state of mind, and the agency of the imagination. If it occurred in the indistinctness of night, or the confusion of numbers, we immediately admit, that in such cases, the senses are unable to afford us that sure evidence which they might have done in the clear light of day, or the calmness of uninterrupted observation. Such considerations as these are founded upon principles, which are admitted as legitimate and essential by the most enlightened christian scholars, and are among the elements of all criticism, profane as well as sacred.

In pursuing the examination, upon which we are about to enter, we are not only authorised but compelled to be governed by such principles, to call to our aid all that we know of the influences of the occasion and the established laws of our nature. By this assistance, and by this only, shall we be enabled to place in that fair and perspicuous light of truth and consistency, which is surely possible, this difficult portion of Holy Writ.

When all Judea was anxiously awaiting the fulfilment of prophecy and tradition in the appearance upon earth of the promised Messiah, who, as they supposed, was to raise them from the subjection into which they had sunk, annihilate the power and the very name of their enemies, and lead them through glory and honour, to universal empire; when every ear was listening to hear the first sound of his victorious trump, and every eye gazing to catch a glimpse of his triumphant banner;—in this state of feeling the reputed son of a mechanic, in the despised

village of Nazareth, came forth and declared himself the Messiah. Wild as his claim appeared, by the exhibition of miraculous power he convinced a few indigent, simple and uneducated men of its truth. They separated themselves from their former occupations and friends in the full hope of becoming rulers and princes over some of the richest provinces of his boundless empire. But so fundamentally opposite were his principles and mode of life from what they had expected, that they were often upon the point of deserting his society and service, but were withheld by some new display of supernatural power, irresistible eloquence, or commanding virtue.—No language can paint the indignation and bitterness of the Jews. Besides the feeling of contempt which is always attached to an imposter, they were exasperated with what they believed to be a blasphemous attempt to pervert the purposes of God, and rob the Messiah of the dignity of his office. They persecuted the resolute, ridiculed the humble, and despised the peaceful Jesus, while his followers were treated with ignominy, as the weak and deluded instruments of a wretched imposture. They saw their master arrested, insulted, scourged, and condemned to an excruciating, shameful death. They followed him with a lingering hope, as he bore his cross. They saw him nailed, and hanging from it in torture. They did not yet despair, but waited with trembling solicitude for the moment to arrive, when he should come down to avenge his injuries, and assert his dominion. As the strength of his life was slowly diminishing, their expectations became more anxious, more agonizing.—With a loud voice he bowed his head—and died. At that moment every hope departed—all was lost to them. The warnings of their more prudent friends had proved too true. They had given up every thing, and gained nothing. They were pressed down by sorrow and shame. How could they bear the sight of their scorning countrymen! How could they bear their own reflections! The portion of their lives, which they had spent with Jesus, was an inexplicable enigma. They remembered his miracles, his wisdom, his eloquence, his virtue, and his piety, but what were all these to them now! What were his assertions—his promises? A dream that had passed away; and there, upon a cross, was the lifeless bleeding form of *him* who had called himself, and whom they had madly believed to be the Deliverer and the King of Israel. A Roman spear had pierced his side. They turned away with thoughts and feelings little better than distraction; and sought to shelter themselves from the contemptuous triumph of the Jews, who were in the midst of the celebration of their great annual festi-

val; and, in the seclusion of some solitary place, gave themselves up to the power of disappointment and despair.

As the women had not been under the influence of ambitious motives so much as of affection, they suffered deep and great grief, rather than bitter poignant disappointment. The men were anxious to eradicate from their memories every trace of their humiliating delusion; they endeavoured to forget him whom they could not but look back upon with love and admiration, although he had so miserably deceived them. The women cherished his memory and derived comfort and satisfaction from mourning together over his melancholy fate; they gathered round his cross, not so much with the hope of witnessing and aiding in his rescue, and the development of his imperial character, as from sympathy with his sufferings, and a wish to soothe them. They watched the commitment of his corpse to the tomb, and were coming early on the first morning of the week to perform the last duty of affection and esteem. Here the narratives commence. Such were the probable situations of his followers, when our Lord rose from the dead, and such were their feelings when the circumstances occurred, of which they are the evidences. Allowing for the influence of such a state of mind let us examine their testimony.

It is not to be disputed, that there are difficulties in this testimony. If it were possible fairly to reconcile all apparent verbal contrariety, which is certainly very doubtful, yet it cannot be denied that the impressions, with respect to the succession of the events, and the events themselves, derived from reading the narratives of the different evangelists, are very unlike and discordant, so that we are ready to admit the existence of actual and real discrepancies. The extreme importance of the subject demands of us a thorough and candid examination, before we venture to determine, what is the legitimate weight of the objection drawn from these discrepancies. In the first place, let it be remembered, that it is requiring too much, to expect to find the statements of the same events, or series of events, by different writers, exactly similar. Such a similarity, it is well known, would be very unnatural, and by no means creditable to them on the score of veracity. The only valuable and real object is obtained, when we can reasonably convince ourselves, that we have arrived at *a true and satisfactory apprehension of the nature and succession of the events described;* and that this corresponds to the accounts before us, after making allowance for the peculiar circumstances of the writers.

The following *narrative* appears to us the most probable in itself, and the most easily, and with the least violence to their indi-

vidual statements, deduced from the combined and compared histories of the evangelists. At some time during the second night, and after the commencement of the third day of our Lord's sepulture, a great disturbance happened, (or as is more properly translated, 'there was an earthquake,') and an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, and rolled away the stone from the entrance of the tomb. Through fear of him the keepers were alarmed, becoming like dead men, while Jesus rose and departed from the tomb. At the first gleam of the morning Mary Magdalene, accompanied by many other women, came bearing spices and perfumed ointments to the sepulchre, to embalm the body of their master. Upon approaching the spot, the large stone rolled away, and the entrance left open, very much surprised them. They hastened; and Mary giving a rapid glance within, discovered that the body had been removed. Without waiting to consult with the other women, she ran immediately to inform the disciples. Her heart was bursting at the moment with grief and indignation, at the idea which she probably entertained, that the malice of his enemies, not satisfied with persecuting and giving him up to a degraded and cruel death, had followed her loved Master to the very grave, which they had rifled of his remains and carried them, she knew not whither. Upon reaching the apostles she was received by the most of them, as we should be led to expect. She brought to their minds an unwelcome subject. They had suffered enough for their attachment to Jesus while living, and were not disposed to trouble or endanger themselves on his account, now that he was dead. It was only in the noble soul of Peter, and the affectionate heart of John, that Mary found any sympathy. They accompanied her back to the tomb. Their minds were filled with anxious and conflicting emotions. They were at a loss to account for what Mary had been telling them, for it was really difficult to believe, that the Jews would have put themselves to the inconvenience, or have been so relentless, as to drag his body from the grave; and without such a supposition how could they explain what had happened? The glorious truth had never entered their minds. John being the youngest and most active, reached the tomb first, (the company of women having previously left it;) but the mysterious singularity of the whole affair affected him with that species of wonder, which is very much allied to, if not wholly made up of fear. He remained at the entrance. Not so with Peter, he was determined to be checked by nothing, but to sift the thing to the bottom, and revenge the insult which had been offered to his master while dead, with as much earnestness as he would have done while living. After satisfying themselves

by an examination of the tomb of the truth of Mary's account, they returned, wondering at what had been done. She continued alone, mournfully watching the spot where she had last seen her Lord; and while gazing there, two angels appeared, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body had been laid. They say unto her 'Woman, why dost thou weep?' She said unto them 'Because they have taken away my master, and I know not where they have laid him.' Immediately after making this reply she turned round, and saw Jesus himself. When she had recognized him and received his message to his brethren, she went again and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and related what he had said unto her.—The women, with whom Mary Magdalene had come to the tomb in the first place, remained there while she was going to inform the disciples of the removal of the body. Soon after her departure from them, the angel with bright vestments appeared to them upon the rolled-away stone, and gave them directions to go also and inform the disciples. In executing this commission they may have met Peter, John and Mary. or they may not; whichever way it may have been, is unimportant.

It now remains for us to examine this narrative with reference to the several accounts of the Resurrection given us by the different Evangelists, and to reconcile it with them. Although *John* was indebted for almost all his account to the women, there are some considerations, which have induced us to conform our narrative to his account in preference to the others. Without taking into view his high comparative authority among the apostles, it is surely very much in favour of his testimony, that he took so immediate and deep an interest in the subject. Besides the particularity and distinctness of his account, it is most easily reconciled with, and derives collateral confirmation from, the others; as we shall now endeavour to show.

St. Matthew gives the impression, that the angel, who came down from Heaven and rolled away the stone, sat upon it, and remained there, until the arrival of the women. This is our first impression upon reading his account; but when we examine it with reference to the others, our ideas may undergo a change. It seems that the centinels, (xxviii. 11.) while the women were going from the tomb, went into the city to inform the Chief Priests of what had occurred; but that, while the angel was present, (v. 4.) they were filled with fear and became as dead men. Consequently, judging solely from the narrative of Matthew, they must have been in this state during the visit of the women, and must have been observed by them. But if so, the fact, would have been mentioned, for the apparently lifeless bodies of several

men laying near the mouth of the tomb would have been too striking a circumstance to be neglected. It does not appear, however, from the other Evangelists, that they, or the women, had noticed it. But by supposing that St. Matthew has omitted to mention a circumstance, which was not material to his narrative, that, when the angel had accomplished the delivery of Jesus from the grave, he disappeared, and became visible again soon after the arrival of the women, we shall relieve ourselves of the soldiers; who collecting their faculties, and finding the sepulchre empty, might have gone to the city in the interval of the angel's disappearance. The only other difficulty in Matthew is in v. 9, in which it is said, that all the women saw Jesus. This has the appearance of being an error, as it is in opposition to the other accounts. It is an error, however, which can be very easily accounted for, by supposing, what is natural enough, a mingling of the relation of Mary Magdalene with that of the other women. If *several* had seen him, it would not have been denied as it is by "the two," who were walking together to Emmaus, (Luke, xxiv. 24.)

It appears from *St. Mark*, that the angel was not visible to the women as soon as they came in sight of the tomb, or the stone. Mark, xvi. 2. 'And very early in the morning of the first day of the week, at the rising of the sun, they went to the tomb; and were saying to each other: who shall roll away for us the stone from the entrance of the tomb? (for it was very great,) when, on looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled away. So they went into the tomb,' &c. Now the fact, that St. Mark does not mention the appearance of the angel upon the stone, is, in itself, no proof that he did not believe and know it to be the case; but as he speaks so particularly of the stone, it is not to be supposed, that he would have neglected a circumstance so important, and which would immediately have occurred to him, had he ever been told of it, namely, the presence of the 'angel of the Lord' whose 'appearance was like lightning,' and whose 'raiment was bright as snow.' This strengthens very much what we have said above concerning the reappearance of the angel, and authorizes the supposition, that Mary Magdalene left the tomb before any miraculous appearance. As they were approaching the entrance, and 'in the act of going in' (a meaning as it respects time, which 'εισελθουσαι' can very well bear,*) they beheld a youth,

*It is well known to every one, in the least conversant with the interpretation of Greek, that the power of the aorist is, more than any thing else in that language, the 'crux grammaticorum.' There have been numerous theories upon the subject, and it still opens a fair and extensive field for research and speculation. Some writers upon grammar have contended, that words in these tenses are not universally restricted to either of the three great divisions of time, although they most usually

upon the right, that is upon the stone, clothed in bright garments; who addressed them, and directed them to the spot where Jesus had laid. They came out, and fled from the tomb with great fear, '*και ουδενι ουδεν ειπον*,' not as it is commonly translated, 'and told no one any thing,' for they were going upon the express purpose of telling the disciples. The idea to be conveyed is 'they said not a word to each other,' but ran speechless with fear, and joy, and hastened to convey the astonishing intelligence.' Mark affirms v. 9, that Mary Magdalene. first of all and alone, saw Jesus.

St. Luke is less particular than any of the evangelists, in describing the visit to the tomb. He, at first, speaks of a number of women without mentioning any by name, 'some women, who had come with him from Galilee,' xxiii. 55. After relating the circumstances which occurred there, he gives his authorities. 'Now it was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and the *others with them*, who told these things to the apostles,' xxiv. 10. It is observable, that his account is just what

refer to what is past. Others have determined them to be past tenses, and have pointed out the circumstances in their application, which distinguished them from the other past tenses. Dr. Beattie has attempted to prove, not very necessary we think, that aorist participles do not, as is generally supposed, have a reference to past time, or time at all. We believe, that something can always be discovered in the aspect of the idea conveyed, which refers to past time. Beattie's instance is from Mark, xvi, 16. '*ο πιστευσας σωθησεται*' in which he says that, as it is a promise, the participle, which is an aorist, must regard future times, if it regard time in any way. But he did not observe that, as it expresses a condition necessary to be complied with *before* obtaining the reward, it is properly used in a past tense, in as much as it stands in such a relation of time towards the verb with which it is connected. Salvation is to come *after* belief. Lord Monboddo, following the etymology of the word 'aorist,' determines its use to be, what it generally seems to be, the expression of past events without any restriction, and without any reference to the completion of the act, or the present time. Its use, he says, is frequent in narrative and history; in which, in most cases, it sustains the relation of time towards the writer. Such we suppose to be its present use. According to Lord M. if the meaning in the text were, as it is generally translated, 'when they had entered in, &c.' the perfect would have been used, for the action would have been finished, and the word '*ιδον*' would have determined it not merely to be past time, but as past *before* another specified event 'their seeing, &c.' But if we suppose, that '*ιδον*' does not determine the completion of the act expressed, by the participle, we recognize immediately the propriety of its being an aorist; for in the sentence, 'while they were going in they saw, &c.' the words, 'they saw,' do not limit the action expressed by the words 'while they were going in,' for they might have continued going in, after they had seen the angel, as they really did. If, on the other hand, we say, that 'when they had entered they saw, &c.' we not only determine the time, but express the *completion* of the act described by '*εισελθουσαι*;' which last we have certainly no authority to do. In insisting upon our interpretation our point is to render Mark accordant with Matthew, who says, that the angel was seen upon the rolled-away stone, which must have been without the tomb. Now it may be said, that they were entering the tomb while they were approaching its mouth with that intent, with as much propriety, as when they were passing immediately within the mouth. For some of the best views which have been given of the nature of aorists see 'Beattie on Language' part ii. ch. ii. sec. v. 'Monboddo on Language,' part ii. book i. ch. 11 & 12.—'Everett's Buttman,' p. 235.—'Bloomfield's Matthai,' vol. ii. upon the Tenses—and 'Port Royal Greek Grammar,' p. 397.

might have been expected from the mixed testimony of these witnesses. Some circumstances are taken from Mary, some from the others, and some omitted from the evidence of both parties. The angel at the mouth of the tomb is omitted, so is the appearance of Jesus to Mary; and the two angels, whom she saw, are introduced to the whole company of women, while they are made to speak what the angel at the mouth of the tomb spoke, according to the other evangelists.* In v. 12, he says, that Peter went to the tomb, in v. 24, that *some of the number* went, but *they* saw not Jesus. This shews, that he did not confine himself to strict accuracy, and confirms the account of John, who says, that he accompanied Peter.

Now, instead of weakening, these discrepancies add to the credit of the writers, for the simple reason, that they are natural, and such as might have been expected. If such a circuitous succession of events, as has been supposed by some harmonists, really took place, we much doubt, whether the perfect consistency of four witnesses, who related the testimony of others, and after the lapse of more than twenty years, upon an affair too, that was accompanied with so much excitement, would not be a little suspected by any court of justice. If we were to derive an account of the battle of Waterloo from four officers, who had been engaged there, we should not be disposed to deny, that there had been such a battle, because there were inconsistencies in their statements; but, supposing that we had heard of the battle from them only, should we not be much more likely to suspect that the whole story were a fiction, made up for the purpose of deceiving us, if we found the accounts consistent to a letter.

* This will appear more clearly from comparing the different passages, Luke xxiv. 2—9. 'Now they found the stone rolled away from the tomb; and went in, but found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And, whilst they were perplexing themselves about this matter, behold two men came upon them in glistening apparel; and said to the women, who were greatly terrified, with their faces towards the ground: 'Why are ye seeking him who is alive, among the dead? He is not here, but hath been raised up. Remember what he told you while he was yet in Galilee,' &c. And they remembered this declaration, and went back from the tomb, &c. Mark xvi. 5—8. 'And as they were going into the tomb, (see note to page 200) they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long shining robe: and they were alarmed. Then he saith unto them, do not alarm yourselves: ye are seeking Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified: he hath been raised up: he is not here: see the place where they laid him. But depart; tell his disciples and Peter, he is going before you into Galilee: there will ye see him, as he told you. So they went out,' &c. Matt. xxviii. 5—8. 'But the angel said unto the women, be not ye afraid: for I know that ye are seeking Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here: for he hath been raised up, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go in haste to tell his disciples, that he hath been raised from the dead: and behold he is going before you into Galilee: there will ye see him. Lo, I told you. And they went out in haste,' &c. As St. John confines himself to the relation of the circumstances witnessed by Mary Magdalene, he is wholly silent with respect to the angel at the mouth of the tomb.

We say that the principles of human nature would lead us to expect discrepancies. To establish this, we refer to the description which has been attempted of the state of mind among the followers of Jesus during the time of his sepulture, and ask the attention of our readers to what we think a probable statement of the influence upon their feelings, and their convictions of the accounts which they received of the resurrection, supposing that the events occurred, and that they were reported according to the combined and collated narrative which we have given.—Very early in the morning Mary Magdalene came running to the disciples with the intelligence of the removal of the body. She was received with a degree of indifference, for which we have endeavoured to account. Peter and John, however, returned with her. Soon after their departure, the women who had seen the angels, came rushing in, one after another, agitated and alarmed beyond measure, each affirming in different words, and with varied minuteness, according to their individual mental collectedness, a fact, than which nothing in all probability could seem more wild and incredible, the resurrection of a crucified man from the grave. The first emotion was a doubting astonishment; but the successive arrivals of the women bringing the same account, and the recollection of the miracles of Jesus, particularly the raising of Lazarus, begun to work a gradual conviction of the truth of what they heard, when Peter and John came back, with the simple intelligence that the body was indeed gone, but that they had seen no angel—no miraculous appearance whatever. The effect of their report can be easily imagined. Their superior authority, their coolness and self-possession, compared with the confusion and terror of the women, brought back and fixed more strongly than ever, the incredulity of the apostles. Every one knows the tendency of excited minds to shift from extreme to extreme. They had been almost persuaded to involve themselves afresh in the shame and disappointment under which they were still smarting, they had given a rash belief to the stories of the women; they now decidedly rejected them, and resolved not to allow themselves to be deceived again by their 'idle tales.' Just at this unlucky moment, Mary Magdalene came in with the information, that she had seen two angels, and Jesus himself. Another scene of confusion commenced, but the single unsupported evidence of Mary, could not subdue the disbelief of the apostles, which had been already hardened by disappointment. In the language of Mark, 'although they heard that he was alive, and had been seen by her, they believed not.' St. John implies, that they were not brought to believe, until Jesus had appeared to Simon Peter.

Now is it natural to suppose, that St. Matthew, or any one else, who might have been in the midst of all this confusion, and have participated in all the vicissitudes of such high-wrought excitement, could have had clear and thoroughly accurate ideas of all the wonderful circumstances, that were affirmed and contradicted, believed and denied?

Besides, we are to remember that it was not from such testimony and under such circumstances, that the apostles derived all their evidence of the fact of the resurrection. If it had been so, it would have served as the ground of an objection of some weight. But the evidence, which they then received, was comparatively insignificant when considered in connection with the other overwhelming proofs of this glorious truth; for in the presence of hundreds they saw and conversed with Jesus after his death, enjoyed his society for forty days, and finally witnessed his visible ascension in glory to the bosom of his Father.

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

A CASE OF NON COMPOS MENTIS.

The following curious documents are worth being recorded. They consist of the Presentment of the grand jury, and the verdict of the petit jury, upon James Davenport, a celebrated fanatic, who was one of the principal instruments in producing the first Revival of Religion, as it was called, under Whitefield. They are to be found in the Boston Evening Post, No. 370, a newspaper published at that time.

'The Presentment.

'Suffolk ss. &c. omitting the Form—"The *Jurors* of our Sovereign Lord the King—upon Oath present—That one James Davenport of Southold, in the County of Suffolk on Long-Island, in the Government of New-York, *Clerk*, now Resident in Boston, under the Pretence of *praying*, *preaching* and *exhorting*, at Diverse Places in the Towns of Boston and Dorchester, both in the County of Suffolk, first before mentioned, and at diverse Times in the Months of *July* last, and *August* current, particularly on, or about, the 20 Day of *July* last, and the 1st and 16th Days of *August* current, did, at Boston aforesaid, in the Hearing of great Numbers of the Subjects of our Lord the

KING, maliciously publish, and with a loud Voice utter and declare many *slanderous* and *reviling Speeches*, against the *godly* and *faithful* Ministers of the Gospel in this Province, but more particularly against the Ministers of the Gospel in the Town of BOSTON aforesaid, then and there maliciously publishing and declaring of, and concerning them, the said Ministers, these false and scandalous Words, and many others to the same Effect and Purpose, viz. "That the *greatest Part* of the said Ministers (meaning the Ministers of the Gospel in this *Province*, and more particularly of the Town of BOSTON aforesaid) *were carnal and unconverted Men;* that they (meaning the said Ministers) *knew nothing of JESUS CHRIST, and that they were leading their People blindfold down to Hell, and that they were destroying and murdering of Souls by Thousands;* the said JAMES DAVENPORT, at the same Time, *directing and advising their* (the said Ministers) *Hearers to withdraw from them the said Ministers, and not to hear them preach, nor frequent the Assemblies of publick Worship, where they, the said Ministers, taught and preach'd, for that the following and hearing of them the said Ministers, was as destructive to the Souls of those who heard them, as swallowing Rats-Bane or Poison was to their Bodies; praying the LORD to pull them the said Ministers, down, and put others in their Places:*" By Means whereof, *great Numbers* of People have *withdrawn* themselves from the *publick Worship of GOD*, and the *Assemblies* as by Laws required, the public Peace of our Lord the KING hath been much disturb'd, the LORD'S-DAY greatly prophan'd, the lawful Authority had in great Contempt, all which is contrary to the Laws, as also to the Peace, Crown, and Dignity of our said Lord the KING.

'JOS. GREEN. *Foreman.*

'The said JAMES DAVENPORT, being arraigned upon the said *Presentment*, pleaded not guilty, and for Trial put himself on the *Country;* a *Jury* being sworn to try the Issue, Mr. BENJAMIN LANDON, *Foreman*, and Fellows, on Oath, say, *That the said* JAMES DAVENPORT *uttered the Words laid in the Presentment*, except those Words "that they (viz. the Ministers) knew nothing of JESUS CHRIST:" *and that at the Time when he uttered these Words, he was* non compos mentis, *and therefore that the said* JAMES DAVENPORT *is not guilty.*

'Attest. SAMUEL TYLEY *Clerk.*'

PREACHING.

'SERMONS being addressed to the populace, whose inattention seldom permits them to carry away more than a few separate

scraps, care must be taken to deliver nothing that is not perfectly innocent to the tenderest digestion. The preacher must not do like our physicians, who often mingle antimony, solanum, opium and other poisonous drugs in their prescriptions; because mankind is so perverse, they will be sure to pick up the poison, and leave the correcting ingredients behind; if not to swallow it, at least to throw in his face, and bespatter his character.'

Tucker.

OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW OF NATURE.

'THE world's first creation, and the preservation since of things created, what is it, but only so far forth a manifestation by execution, what the *eternal law of God* is concerning things natural? And as it cometh to pass in a kingdom rightly ordered, that after a law is once published, it presently takes effect far and wide, all states framing themselves thereunto; even so let us think it fareth in the natural course of the world; since the time that God did first proclaim the edicts of his law upon it, heaven and earth have hearkened unto his voice, and their labour hath been to do his will; "he made a law for the rain;" he gave his "decree unto the sea, that the waters should not pass his commandment." Now, if nature should intermit her course, and leave altogether, though it were but for awhile, the observation of her own laws; if those principal and mother elements of the world, whereof all things in this lower world are made, should lose the qualities which they now have; if the frame of that heavenly arch erected over our heads should loosen and dissolve itself; if celestial spheres should forget their wonted motions, and by irregular volubility turn themselves any way as it might happen; if the prince of the lights of heaven, which now as a giant doth run his unwearied course, should, as it were, through a languishing faintness, begin to stand, and to rest himself; if the moon should wander from her beaten way, the times and seasons of the year blend themselves by disordered and confused mixture, the winds breathe out their last gasp, the clouds yield no rain, the earth be defeated of heavenly influence, the fruits of the earth pine away, as children at the withered breasts of their mother, no longer able to yield them relief; what would become of man himself, whom these things do now all serve? See we not plainly that obedience of creatures unto the law of nature is the stay of the whole world?

The due observation of the law, which reason teacheth us, cannot but be effectual unto their great good who observe the same, for we see the whole world and each part thereof so compacted, that as long as each thing performeth only that work

which is natural unto it, it thereby preserveth both other things and also itself. Contrariwise, let any principal thing as the sun, the moon, any one of the heavens or elements, but once cease, or fail, or swerve, and who doth not easily conceive that the sequel thereof would be ruin both to itself, and whatsoever dependeth on it? And is it possible, that man being not only the noblest creature in the world, but even a very world in himself, his transgressing the law of his nature should draw no manner of harm after it? Yes, "tribulation and anguish unto every soul that doeth evil." Good doth follow unto all things by observing the cause of their nature, and on the contrary side, evil by not observing it.' *Hooker.*

USE OF SCRIPTURAL LANGUAGE.

It must be confessed, that those theologians who entertain different sentiments from the reputedly orthodox, respecting the atonement, the nature of future punishment, &c. have not, in the general tenor of their writings or preaching, been so tenacious of scriptural language as their opponents. In some instances they evidently avoid scriptural expressions, lest they should appear to entertain the sentiments which they reject. But this has the appearance of yielding the field to the adversary, and of setting reason and scripture at variance; which is very injurious to the disseminating of their principles among illiterate Christians. While we are inundated by one class of instructors with scriptural phraseology, which seems to be cautiously avoided by the other, we cannot be surprised that the populace should steadfastly adhere to those, whose habitual language seems to evince, that they, and they *alone*, are preaching the Gospel. It is to be lamented that the important doctrine of Man's redemption from the wrath of God, and the just punishment of his violated laws, is seldom treated, by those who are termed rational Christians, in any other than in an *argumentative* manner; and their arguments are solely employed to confute the popular notions concerning it. When the apostles mention the death of Christ, which is their favourite topic, or describe the blessings flowing from it, in varied phraseology; when they represent him as a propitiation for sin, as a ransom, as a redeemer, the sanctifier; when they assert that he has washed us from our sins in his own blood, that he who knew no sin, was made sin for us, &c. it is invariably to call forth the best affections of the heart, that we may 'love him who first loved us, and gave himself for us;' it is to animate and encourage us 'to walk worthy of the holy vocation wherewith we were called.' The total omission, or superficial attention to such motives,

induces a languor into their compositions which is not compensated by the most accurate chain of reasoning, or by a superior elegance of language.

Nor can it be expected that *their* sentiments, however just in themselves, who invariably adopt the language of ethics, in the place of the infinitely more energetic language of theology, should make a due impression upon illiterate Christians. When the terms *virtue, and vice* which the Scriptures know not, are incessantly substituted for *holiness, righteousness, purity of heart*, &c. which the Scriptures do know; or for *sin, ungodliness, wickedness*, which present themselves in every page, is it surprizing that such preachers should be considered, by the multitude, as lecturers in Ethics, rather than as preachers of the Gospel?

Dr. Cogan.

DEFINITIONS.

By this it appears how necessary it is for any man that aspires to true knowledge, to examine the Definitions of former Authors; and either to correct them, where they are negligently set down; or to make them himselfe. For the errours of Definitions multiply themselves, according as the reckoning proceeds; and lead men into absurdities, which at last they see, but cannot avoyd, without reckoning anew from the beginning; in which lyes the foundation of their errours. From whence it appears, that they which trust to books, do as they that cast up many little summs into a greater, without considering whether those little summs were rightly cast up or not; and at last finding the errour visible, and not mistrusting their first grounds, know not which way to cleare themselves; but spend time in fluttering over their bookes; as birds that entring by the chimney, and finding themselves inclosed in a chamber, flutter at the false light of a glasse window, for want of wit to consider which way they came in. So that in the right Definition of Names, lyes the first use of speech; which is the Acquisition of Science. And in wrong, or no Definitions, lyes the first abuse; from which proceed all false and senslesse Tenets; which make those men that take their instruction from the authority of books, and not from their own meditation, to be as much below the condition of ignorant men, as men endued with true Science are above it. For between true Science and erroneous Doctrines, Ignorance is in the middle. Naturall sense and imagination are not subject to absurdity. Nature itselfe cannot erre: and as men abound in copiousnesse of language; so they become more wise, or more mad than ordinary. Nor is it possible without Letters for any man to

become either excellently wise, or (unless his memory be hurt by disease, or ill constitution of organs) excellently foolish. For words are wise men's counters, they do but reckon by them; but they are the mony of fooles, that value them by the authority of an Aristotle, a Cicero, or a Thomas, or any other Doctor whatsoever, if but a man.—*Hobbes' Leviathan.*

OSSIAN AND ST. PATRICK.

Among the miscellaneous pieces of Herder, is a dialogue on national religions. Its chief strain is to show that the gospel as a universal religion is not meant to break down the sentiments and manners that characterize individual nations, and thus produce an absolute uniformity. It complains that christianity has so often come harshly in on the peculiarities of a people; introducing a new language to the exclusion of their own in matters of worship; and doing unnecessary violence to their established customs and habits of thinking. Two friends are introduced as discussing these points; and as one of them is admiring a beautiful sunset, that was just leaving its calm light on objects of a thousand different colours,—brightening them all but not changing any of them,—the other takes occasion to say, that in the same manner should 'the sun of righteousness' look on the nations of the earth, lending its light to them equally, but sparing to each its own distinctive hues.

The subject is introduced by the reading of a poetical dispute between Ossian and St. Patrick, which is pretended—for it is probably a mere pretension—to be translated from the English. It is a spirited performance; and implies very well in the last stanza the care which the monkish religion took to extol the intercession of saints and apostles, while the first principles of divine truth were left unenforced. Perhaps some of our readers may be pleased at having it translated from Herder's 'Miscellaneous Collections' to ours.

OSSIAN.

Now tell me, thou man of learning,
How say the books that are written?
Is not over the kingdom of Heaven
The mighty Fingal the Lord?

ST. PATRICK.

The truth shall the books reveal thee,
Thou hero and bard of the battle,
In Heaven reigns not thy father,
There rule neither Oscar nor Gaul.

OSSIAN.

Thou giv'st me but mournful tidings,
O priest, of my friends departed.
If Fingal prevails not in Heaven,
What boots all thy doctrine to me?

ST. PATRICK.

Wake up from thy long deep slumber,
Wake up to a holy song!
Extinguished is now thy vigour,
Thou standest no more in the fight.

OSSIAN.

Extinguished indeed is my vigour,
Extinct are the heroes of Fingal.
Yet for that, no priest do I honour,
And honour no priestly song.

ST. PATRICK.

The song of the priest is sweeter
Than the sweetest of all thy harpings.
On the hills thou wert once a hero,
But now art thou foolish and weak.

OSSIAN.

I was on the hills a hero;
That knowest thou, tongue of the scorner!
An eager warriour was Ossian,
And base is thy mockery now.

Twelve dogs always played round Fingal,
They played in the valley of Smail;
Better loved I those hounds wild barking
Than all thy bell-clanging,* priest.

ST. PATRICK.

Thou lovedst the dogs' wild barking,
Thou lovedst the clashing of armour,
Far better than prayer and confession:—
And therefore lies Fingal in bonds.

OSSIAN.

Thou speakest the words of deception,
The books that thou readest deceive thee;

* There is a tradition that church bells were invented by Paulinus, who was Patrick's cotemporary.

No god and no monarch has fetters,
In which the bold Fingal lies.

ST. PATRICK.

The fetters of HELL are engirding
The haughty divider of treasures.
To my God he ascribed not the glory,
And he pants in the house of pain.

OSSIAN.

O again for the heroes of Bosga!
The invincible warriors of Moran!
The portals of hell we would shiver,
And ours should be the house.

ST. PATRICK.

Though the warlike sons of the mountains
Should all rise again at thy calling,
They never could shiver those portals,
And ne'er would be yours the house.

OSSIAN.

How say the books that are written?
What is it of hell that they tell thee?
May it not be as pleasant as heaven?
Is it wanting in hounds and in game?

ST. PATRICK.

On the wing is no insect of evening,
In secret no moth corrupteth,
Beneath the broad buckler of heaven,
And the searching eye of its king.

OSSIAN.

Let its king take a lesson from Fingal!
In Fingal's halls of welcome
Were table and roof for the stranger,
And none demanded,—'Whence come?'

ST. PATRICK.

Compare not a man with the Godhead,
Of whom, old bard, thou know'st nothing:
Long ago was established his kingdom,
His empire ruleth for aye.

OSSIAN.

And shall I not compare Fingal
* * * * * *

ST. PATRICK.

O this, this hath been thy destruction,
On thy Lord and thy God to believe not;
Therefore brothers and sons have fallen,
And Ossian laments alone.

OSSIAN.

Not this, not this was our ruin;
My sons and my brothers have fallen
Because far away from them Fingal
Must twice take the way to Rome.

Once safely dwelt Caol and Oscar
And Fingal aloft on the mountains.
Loud was the hounds' deep baying,
And fierce their bound o'er the plain.

The powerful Fingal was chieftain,
We joyed to obey his bidding;
And no one, thou crook-staff'd preacher,
No one then ask'd for God.

ST. PATRICK.

Hold now thy wicked reproaches;
To hear and bear them is sinful.
My God is higher and greater
Than the mountain chief and thou.

OSSIAN.

The least renown'd of the battles,
Which Fingal my father engag'd in,
Is worth more than he whom thou servest,
And, man of reading, than thou.

ST. PATRICK.

Yet be taught and redeemed, I beg you,
Give heed to the teaching of meekness.
With the weight of years thou art sinking,
O sink without guilt to the grave!

OSSIAN.

I will to the care commit me
Of the twelve holy apostles;
And if I have sins committed,
Those sins be hid in my grave.

REVIEW.

ARTICLE VIII.

A reply to Dr. Ware's Letters to Trinitarians and Calvinists. By Leonard Woods, D. D. Abbot Professor of Christian Theology in Theological Seminary, Andover. Flagg & Gould. 1821.

Answer to Dr. Woods' reply, in a Second Series of Letters addressed to Trinitarians and Calvinists. By Henry Ware, D. D. Hollis Professor of Divinity in the University at Cambridge. Hilliard & Metcalf. 1822.

Remarks on Dr. Ware's Answer. By Leonard Woods, D. D. Andover. Sept. 1822.

A Postcript to the Second Series of Letters addressed to Trinitarians and Calvinists, in reply to the Remarks of Dr. Woods on those Letters. By Henry Ware, D. D. Cambridge. 1823.

Review of Professor Norton's Views of Calvinism. From the Christian Spectator.

The controversy, commenced by Professor Stuart in 1819, and occasioned by Dr. Channing's celebrated Baltimore Sermon of the same year, has been continued to this time, has been supported with great ability on both sides, and seems destined to form a memorable epoch in the history of religious opinions in our country. We should regret to see all interest in this discussion dying away, as we are pursuaded the public can hardly expect a better opportunity to become acquainted with the merits of several of the most important questions affecting the faith and practice of a christian. The four first mentioned at the head of this article are the only publications belonging to this controversy not already noticed in this Journal; and these we now bring before our readers, rather for the purpose of recommending them, than of reviewing them. It is far from our intention to take up these pamphlets in detail, or to go into any thing like an analysis of what they contain. They must be read themselves, and, from their very nature, they review one another; leaving nothing for us to do but to offer some general remarks on the singular turn which this controversy has taken, and on the new and singular pretensions set up by the orthodox party.

The turn, which this controversy has taken, will not fail, we think, to be regarded by Unitarians in the light of an important concession. It seems to be now generally admitted by the best writers on the orthodox side in New England, that the common objections against Calvinism are unanswerable, if we suppose Calvinism to be, what its opposers have always understood it to be. 'If,' says Dr. Woods, 'the system of the Orthodox were, in truth, what Priestley, and Fellowes, and Belsham, and even the Author of this Sermon [Dr. Channing] have represented it to be; its consequences would indeed be *pernicious*.'* Again he says in another place, 'I allow, indeed, that the doctrine of election, as set forth by Dr. Ware, *admits of no defence*.'† Similar concessions abound in this controversy, all which clearly evince a conviction on the part of the more learned and philosophical among the orthodox, that they must either contrive to put a new face on Calvinism, or else abandon the system altogether.

They have, therefore, found themselves reduced to the alternative, either of admitting that Calvinism has been represented fairly, and then according to their own confessions it must be given up; or else of denying that it has been represented fairly, and then they change entirely the ground of the controversy—making the inquiry to be, not whether Calvinism be true, but what Calvinism is. Placed in this dilemma, it is not wonderful, that they have attempted the latter course; that they have directed all their ingenuity and learning to this single point, namely, to prove that Calvinism has been misrepresented; with what prospect of success will presently appear. It is, however, but justice to these gentlemen to say, that they have undertaken this only in the last resort, and probably *because* it was their last resort.

As to the general charge of misrepresenting an opponent's opinions or system, it has always been a perpetual topic of complaint and recrimination among disputants upon all subjects. And doubtless, in most cases, the charge is not wholly without foundation. For it is hardly to be expected with regard to the minuter distinctions, dependencies, and relations of any system, and especially with regard to its moral aspects, that friends and enemies will see them in the same light, or receive from them the same impressions. From the very nature of the case, therefore, slight misapprehensions and misrepresentations are scarcely to be avoided, and, when occurring, are to be treated with mutual forbearance. But not such are the misapprehensions and misrepresentations charged upon Dr. Channing, Dr. Ware

* Letters to Unitarians, p. 133. † Reply to Dr. Ware, p. 161.

and Professor Norton. They are affirmed to relate to the 'essential features' of Calvinism, to have been made 'with deliberation and care,' and as 'in no degree the result of *mistake*,' but of an *intention to injure*. Professor Stuart says to Dr. Channing; 'Whatever your aim may have been, the fact is, that you have awakened in all those who differ from you, a deep sensation of an *intentional* injury on your part to their feelings, of contumely, and of misrepresentation of their views.'* Speaking of the doctrine of election Dr. Woods observes: 'The picture which Unitarians and Arminians draw of the doctrine is, in its *essential features*, very unlike the doctrine which we maintain.' And a little farther on: 'And any one who justifies the representation often made of our doctrine in this respect, justifies what may justly be called *religious calumny*.'† So likewise the conductors of the Christian Spectator: 'But in the present instance there is no room for such wonder. The representation is but too evidently made with *deliberation and care*, and is skilfully adapted to produce the effect intended. *It is in no degree the result of mistake.* The spirit which dictated the passage, we are pained to say, is the obvious and sufficient cause of the representation it contains.' Truly these are heavy charges, and the last, especially, expressed without much regard to the common decencies of language. And when we consider that these charges are preferred against men sustaining in the community almost an unequalled reputation for probity and accuracy,—when we find such men openly and repeatedly charged with an INTENTIONAL MISREPRESENTATION MADE WITH A DELIBERATE AND MALICIOUS DESIGN TO INJURE, we cannot refrain from expressing our surprize. But let it pass. One thing, however, we will say, and we hope these gentlemen, who are so fond of accusing their opponents of misrepresenting their opinions will consider it well; if there be guilt in misrepresenting an opponent's *opinions*, there is a still deeper guilt in misrepresenting an opponent's *character*, even though it may be pleaded, as in this case, in mitigation of the offence, that it was committed in the heat of controversy, or in the mortification of a defeat.

But even the charge of an *unintentional* misrepresentation of Calvinism is not to be brought against Unitarians upon light and insufficient grounds. Have they misrepresented their opponents? —Have they misrepresented the system of their opponents?—Have they misrepresented Calvinism? These questions, (entirely distinct though often confounded together) can be determined in no way so well as by trying the representation, which Unitari-

* Letters, p. 165. † Reply, pp. 150, 156.

ans have given, by those great and acknowedged principles that should govern us in which we say of the characters, opinions and system of an adverse party.

One important rule to be observed in speaking of our opponents is, that we should never, unless under very peculiar circumstances, charge upon them, *personally*, what we believe to be the moral effects of their system, as we understand it. We may look upon a system as very bad in its moral influences, and so it may be as we understand it, and we may understand it right. But we should consider, that those who embrace this system probably understand it very differently; and whether they understand it right or wrong, it is plain that they will be affected by it, not according to our apprehensions of it, but according to their own. It is, therefore, a mark of great unfairness to represent the moral effects of any system upon those who hold it, as being the same with what we believe they would be upon ourselves, if we held it. Now if we apply this rule to the representations complained of, we shall find that it has not been violated. The representations which Unitarians have given have been of Calvinism, not of Calvinists—of the Calvinistic system, in itself considered, and not as it is understood and received by those who call themselves Calvinists. Unitarians have said that Calvinism, in itself considered, is a bad system, that its moral tendencies are bad, and that many of its avowed doctrines, and many more of its implied principles are *impious and blasphemous*. This is what they have often said, and it is what they will probably often say again, as they do firmly believe it—as firmly as they do their own existence. But, in saying this, they affirm nothing of Calvinists themselves. What Calvinists are, and what effects the Calvinistic system, as they understand it, may have had upon them, has nothing to do with the question what Calvinism really is. Calvinists themselves may be all that they would wish to be, and all that they would be thought to be, and yet Calvinism itself, *properly understood and explained*, may be all that Unitarians ever represented it as being. Many among the French Atheists sustained the fairest characters in all their social and domestic relations; but ought this circumstance to affect our views of Atheism?

A second general rule to be observed in speaking of our opponents is, that we never should represent them as holding any principles or doctrines, which they do not admit, or which they expressly disclaim, even though we may think them to be legitimate *inferences* from the system which they profess to hold. In the application of this rule, however, an important distinction is to be observed. Though we have no right to charge even the

legitimate inferences from any system upon the professed holders of that system, yet we have a right, and an undoubted right, to charge them upon the *system itself*. Every man or body of men are at liberty, we conceive, to explain, or limit, or modify their own opinions as they please; and may claim to be understood according to these explanations, limitations, or modifications, so far as they are known. But it is to be observed that these explanations, limitations and modifications respect *their own* belief only, and have nothing to do with the *system* which they profess to hold. The Calvinistic system is one thing, and the actual belief of those who call themselves Calvinists is another; just as the Christian system is one thing, and the actual belief of those who call themselves Christians is another. The Calvinistic system like the Christian system, is what it is *in itself*, and not what is in the opinions or wishes of its friends or enemies. Considered, too, *as a system*, the doctrines and principles, which it may contain by necessary implication, are just as much constituent parts of the system, and may, therefore, be urged with as much justice against it, or in its favour, as if they were expressed and avowed. With respect to the inferences urged against any system, the only question to be determined is, whether they are *legitimate* inferences from the system, or not. The mere circumstance that they are disallowed by those, who profess to hold the system, is nothing. This is, indeed, a good reason why we should not represent these inferences as a part of the actual belief of those who thus expressly and honestly disclaim them; but it is, certainly no reason why we should not urge them as an objection against the system, in itself considered, if we suppose them to be in fact legitimate inferences from the system. Look at the manner in which the orthodox conduct the controversy. Are they not continually alleging it as an objection to Unitarianism, that it exalts reason above revelation, and proposes heaven as the reward of merit. They know very well that Unitarians disavow these pretended inferences from their system; still, however they urge them,—and we admit that they have an undoubted right to urge them—not indeed against Unitarians—but against the Unitarian system in itself considered, provided they can make it appear, that these pretended inferences are fair and legitimate ones.

Applying, therefore, the rule which we have now laid down, and making the important distinction which we have endeavoured to define and illustrate, it will be found, that the representations of Calvinism, which Unitarians have given, are perfectly just and fair. They have said, for example, that Calvinism makes God the author of sin, and man a mere machine. They have not

said that Dr. Woods, or the conductors of the Christian Spectator avow these doctrines, or believe them; and as to the question at issue, it is a matter of perfect indifference whether they do or not. We need to be continually reminded, that the question before us is not what Calvinists profess, or what this or that nominal Calvinist believes; but what is Calvinism itself, considered as a system, when properly understood and explained. Now Unitarians have said and still say, that Calvinism itself, properly understood and explained, teaches by necessary implication, that God is the author of sin, and man is a mere machine; and this they have proved by arguments and authorities which, as they think, are unanswered and unanswerable. If, indeed, these arguments and authorities are fairly disproved, or set aside, then it will appear that Calvinism has been misrepresented; but this has not been done, and cannot be done. To say then, that Calvinism has been misrepresented, merely because some, who call themselves Calvinists, will not admit the representation, or perhaps expressly disclaim it, is to mistake entirely the ground of the controversy, and the particular point in dispute. How, we would inquire, can any system be exposed and refuted but by tracing it to consequences, which the holders of that system have never considered, and, therefore, have never believed, but will reject at once as no part of their real belief. Supposing Calvinism to be as false and pernicious a system, as Unitarians in their consciences believe it to be, we should not expect that this would appear on the face of any representation of the system given by Calvinists themselves, nor on the face of any representation which Calvinists, as such, would acknowledge; for upon giving or acknowledging any such representations they would cease, of course, to be Calvinists. We could only expect to make it appear by tracing the system to its consequences, and by exposing all that it teaches whether expressly or by necessary implication; and in this way we should, no doubt, bring into view many features and principles of Calvinism, which the mass of those, who profess the system, have never considered, and therefore have never believed; but which nevertheless belong to the system, and prove its falsity, and its pernicious tendency. If, then, we have exposed and refuted Calvinism, in the only way, in which it could be exposed and refuted, on the supposition that it were as false and pernicious a system, as we believe and affirm it to be, we ought to be satisfied; and we do not perceive what more, or what else, could have been expected from us.

There is another general rule to be scrupulously observed in the representations which we may give of an adverse system. We are to take our views of it from its accredited formulas, and

most approved expounders. "Every sect of Christians has had in its connection extravagant and fanciful writers, who have attempted to explain and enforce their system without understanding it themselves, and whose writings, therefore, are not regarded as of any authority even by their own denomination. For any one, therefore, to collect together the most extravagant and offensive passages from such writers, and to give them to the world, as a fair view of what their party generally believe, would be manifestly dishonourable and unjust. This, however, it will not be pretended that Unitarians have done, in the representations, true or false, which they have given of Calvinism; as they have taken their views and statements of that system entirely from such works as those of Calvin, the Westminster Assembly, and President Edwards. If we are not to learn what Calvinism is from such authorities, we really do not know from what source the knowledge is to be derived.

But though Unitarians have taken their representations of Calvinism from the best Calvinistic authorities, it may still be contended, that they have *coloured* and *exaggerated* these representations, so as to present the system in distorted forms and under false lights, thereby to expose it to unmerited odium or ridicule. We readily admit the weight of this charge, if it could be sustained; but we deny, that it can be. All will admit, we think, that Calvinism was never presented in a form more thoroughly disgusting and shocking, than in the 'Views' given of it by Professor Norton. And yet it is not a little remarkable, that Mr. N. has confined himself in that performance to a simple statement of some of the fundamental and distinguishing doctrines of Calvinism, as they are actually taught in the standard works on the Calvinistic side, and in the very language in which they are there taught. He has demonstrated, therefore, that to colour or distort the picture of Calvinism as it has been drawn by its own friends, is altogether unnecessary, if not impossible; and that the system is such in itself, that it can hardly be misrepresented except for the better. We should think that enough had been said on this point to silence our opponents forever;—enough and more than enough to convince them, that no doctrine of Calvinism has ever yet been expressed by any Unitarian writer in terms stronger, coarser, or more offensive, than are used in the standard orthodox works to express the same doctrine. This is, of course, no subject for argument or reasoning, and we can, therefore, in proof of what we have said, simply refer our readers to Professor Norton's Views of Calvinism, where they may see the system in the very language, in which its warmest friends and ablest advocates have chosen to have it stated.

But as our orthodox friends do not appear to be fully satisfied with these 'Views' of the system which they profess to hold, we shall take the liberty to give them some more of the same kind, hoping by these means to make them *understand* their system better than they hitherto have done, whether they like it any better or not. We shall however still continue scrupulously to observe the rule, which we have just laid down, and take nothing but from their standard writers, and public professions of faith. In the first place, then, in order to show that Unitarians have not used any colouring or exaggeration in stating the Calvinistic doctrine of Original Sin, we quote the following passage from the Formula Concordiae (Formula of Agreement) respecting the articles of the celebrated Augustan or Ausburg Confession.

'Christians ought not only to recognize and declare their *actual* omissions and transgressions of the commandments of God to be sins; but further, that dreadful and abominable hereditary disease, by which their whole nature is corrupted, should be altogether regarded by them as a horrible sin, and indeed as the principle and source of all sins, from which other transgressions spring as from a root, and flow as from a fountain. And this evil Luther is accustomed to call sometimes the sin of nature, (*peccatum naturae*) and sometimes the sin of the person, (peccatum personae) in order to signify, that *though a man should avoid all evil in thought, word, or action*, (which indeed after the fall of our first parents, it is impossible human nature should do, in this life,) yet nevertheless the nature and person of man is *sinful;* that is, that in its inmost parts, and in the deepest recesses of the heart, it is in every part, completely and wholly, infected, poisoned, and thoroughly corrupted by original sin, in the sight of God. And an account of this corruption, and the sin of our first parents, the nature or person of man [that is *man*, simply as MAN] is accused and condemned by the law of God, so that by nature we are children of wrath, bond slaves of death and damnation, unless we are delivered and preserved from these evils by the benefit of the merits of Christ.'*

It is in this language, that the first reformers express the doctrine of Original Sin in a public official document. Now we ask for a single Unitarian writer, who has attempted an exaggeration upon this. Indeed if Mr. Norton had selected from the whole compass of language the terms, which might the most fully, and strongly, and unequivocally confirm his statements respecting the Calvinistic doctrine of original sin, and show the folly and false-

* Libri Symbolici Eccles. Evangelicæ. Joh. Aug. Henr. Tittmann. 1817. p. 553.

hood of those contained in the Spectator, he could not have put together words more to his purpose than those which we have just quoted.

Again; when Unitarians represent Calvinists as preaching the doctrine that innumerable infants will be punished with eternal damnation, solely on account of original sin, without any personal transgressions, it is often said that they colour and exaggerate the statement. It is denied, or at least disputed, that any Calvinist, of respectable standing, and in his sober senses, ever pushed the horrible consequences of his system so far. But if any man has doubts upon this point, we think they will be effectually resolved upon reading the following quotations from Dr. Twiss, Prolocutor of the assembly of divines at Westminster, a writer of eminence in his day, and expressly referred to by the Conductors of the Christian Spectator as of authority in determining what Calvinism *was*.

'In regard to those,' says this writer, 'who are condemned to eternal death solely on account of Original Sin, their condemnation to eternal death is the consequence of Adam's transgression alone. But many infants depart this life in Original Sin, and consequently are condemned to eternal death on account of Original Sin alone; therefore, the *condemnation of many* INFANTS *to* ETERNAL DEATH is the consequence of Adam's transgression *solely*.*

'The sin of Adam, I confess, was not ours as perpetrated by us in our proper persons; but was rather the sin of our nature, than of our persons. But we existed even then in the loins of Adam, as Levi did in those of Abraham, when the latter paid tithes to Melchisedec; and his sin is made ours by the imputation of God; *so that it has exposed* INNUMERABLE INFANTS *to* DIVINE WRATH, *who were guilty of this sin*, AND OF NO OTHER.'†

There, we ask whether any Unitarian ever attempted to colour or exaggerate a doctrine like this—a doctrine taught in so many words by the Prolocutor of the assembly of Divines at Westminster, and by a thousand others—a doctrine, moreover, which follows necessarily from the Calvinistic system, and which would now be insisted on by all real and consistent Calvinists, if they thought their people would bear it. Not that we look upon this doctrine as presenting the very worst feature of Calvinism; for why should it be thought a more horrible idea, that God will punish innumerable infants with eternal damnation for what they

* Twissi Vindiciae Gratiae Potestatis et Providentiae Dei. Edit. Secund. 4to. Amst. 1631. Lib. I. p. 48.

† Ibid. Lib. III. p. 21.

cannot help, than that he will punish innumerable adult persons with eternal damnation for what *they cannot do?*

But it may be thought that Unitarians have at least misrepresented the doctrine of human inability, as it has been taught by those who believe in Original Sin, and the irrespective decrees of God. Let the following passage, in Luther's treatise on the Servitude of the Will, be read and we think all will admit that but little occasion has been left us for colouring and exaggeration.

'If any one should object,' says he, 'that it is difficult to defend the mercy and justice of God, inasmuch as he condemns the UNDESERVING, (IMMERITOS) that is, those who are impious, only because they are born in impiety, and *have no power, in any way, to do any thing to save themselves from remaining impious and being condemned*, but are forced by a necessity of nature to sin and perish, conformably to what Paul says: 'We were all children of wrath like others'—seeing that THEY WERE CREATED SUCH BY GOD HIMSELF from seed corrupted by the sin of one man, Adam; [cum tales creentur ab ipsomet Deo ex semine vitiato per unius Adami peccatum]—I answer,

'That we must honour and reverence the great mercy of God toward those whom he justifies and saves, though most unworthy; and that we must defer something at least to the divine wisdom, so as to believe God just, when he may appear unjust to us. For if his justice were such, that human apprehension might perceive it to be just; it plainly would not be divine, and would differ in nothing from human justice.'*

Here we find one of the difficulties of Calvinism, stated in as strong and offensive terms as ever proceeded from the pen of a Unitarian, and admitted in all its force by one who will not be accused of unfriendliness to that system. How this difficulty is to be explained, and reconciled with the divine character, our readers have seen, simply *by denying that God is a just being;* that is to say, as we understand justice.

This leads us to make a few more citations from high Calvinistic authorities to prove, that their representations of the divine character have not been coloured, or exaggerated by Unitarians.

Speaking of the punishment of infants, Dr. Twiss is pleased to observe: 'These judgments of God are tremendous, I confess, but just; nor are they to be brought before the tribunal of human wisdom and justice, nor examined and discussed by the rules of our reason and equity. Especially as it is lawful for God the Creator to treat a creature, *however innocent*, (quantum-

* De servo arbitrio. Opp. Tom. II. fol. Witebergae, 1562. fol. 485.

vis immerentem) in whatever manner he pleases, whether it seem good to God to annihilate him, or *to inflict upon him any torture whatever.*'*

In his second book, this writer has a digression, the object of which is to prove, that 'God may afflict or torment an innocent creature at pleasure.' *Probatur posse Deum creaturam immerentem affligere, seu pro libito cruciare*,—'Let us come,' says this champion of thorough Calvinism, 'to the reasons which are brought to prove, that it is repugnant to the justice of God to punish or afflict one who is *not a sinner*.' And under this head we are not at all surprised to find him urged, at last, to declare it as a consequence of his system, that 'THERE IS NO SUCH THING IN GOD AS JUSTICE, PROPERLY SO CALLED, IN RESPECT TO HIS CREATURES, that is to say, by which he is bound in respect to them.' *** 'I acknowledge,' says he, no other justice in God, than that, by which he wisely orders all things to effect his own purposes.'

So much for the *principles* on which Calvinism would make it appear that the Judge of all the earth will do right. And now for the *attitude* in which this system, and some at least of its most distinguished supporters, would have him presented to our affections.

'The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready to the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart, and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood.'†

And this is GOD! Accustomed as we have been to the representations which are given of him by the sacred writers, who almost exhaust the language of metaphor to convey to our minds the most beautiful and touching images of the divine goodness and mercy, who speak of him continually as our Father, as LOVE itself, delighting to do us good, preserving us as the apple of his eye, a strength to the needy, a shadow from the heat and a refuge from the storm—really we should hardly have known Him.

* Vindiciae Gratiae Polestatis and Prov. Dei. Lib. III. p. 21.

† Edward's Works, Vol. vii. p. 495. But as some of our readers may suppose that this is the attitude which God assumes towards great sinners only, President Edwards is careful to set us right on this point. For he immediately observes: 'Thus are *all you* that never passed under a great change of heart, by the mighty power of the Spirit of God upon your souls; all that were never born again, &c. &c. (however you may have reformed your life in many things, and may have had religious affections, and may keep up a form of religion in your families, and closets, and in the houses of God, and may be strict in it') &c. &c. that is to say, all that are not Calvinists.

We had thought that God felt some degree of tenderness and compassion even for the evil and unthankful, so long, at least, as they continued in a state of trial. But President Edwards would have us believe, that 'they are *now* the objects of that very same anger and wrath of God, that is expressed in the torments of hell.'* and that God 'holds them over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect, over the fire.'† It was in such language, and under such images, as Professor Norton has abundantly shown, that this great heresiarch was in the constant practice of representing the character of the Deity, and the relations which he sustained towards all such as had not been 'converted according to rule,' as he somewhere expresses it. The conductors of the Christian Spectator will probably say again that this was a mere matter of *taste* with the gentleman, and, whether to be approved or not, has nothing to do with his opinions as a Calvinist. But we would ask them, whether they think, that any one would be likely to acquire such a taste, who had not previously imbibed calvinistic sentiments; and also, what effect such representations of the Supreme Being are likely to produce on the devotional feelings.—And here we cannot but pause to remark on the unaccountable dullness and apathy of the public mind respecting the representations that are given of our Heavenly Father. Let a man but doubt the correctness of a single text, word, or syllable of the common version of the Scriptures, a version having no authority but what it derives from a few fallible, and prejudiced, and comparatively ignorant translators —or let him call in question a dogma of some antiquated catechism or creed, bring it to the test of God's word, expose it, and hold it up to merited execration—or let him but call by their right names the wild fancies and insane ravings of some distinguished leader of a party, whose reputation it is for the interest of that party to bolster up—and lo! every mouth is opened and every hand is raised against the 'damnable heresy.' It is, forsooth, an offence which 'the charity of the Son of God would not cover.‡' Yet these very persons will sit, calmly and patiently, year after year, and hear a man ascribe principles, and dispositions, and measures to their God, which, if he were to ascribe the same, or any thing like the same, to themselves or their friends, they would rise with indignation from their places, and drive him from their presence.

We readily admit, that when Calvinists apply language like the above to the Supreme Being, they do not realize, at the time, the full extent of its horrid import; and also that its effects, on

* Ibid. p. 489. † Ibid. 496. ‡ Review, p. 39.

those who hear it, are not to the full extent so pernicious as might be reasonably apprehended; for there are many circumstances and considerations, that come in to limit and qualify these effects. But that the long continued practice of using or hearing such language must have some influence on the character, and especially, on our views of life and providence, is beyond a doubt. Indeed, when oppressed with a sense of human infirmity and imperfection, and of the many severe and painful trials and sufferings which are the lot of man—what is there to make us feel our existence to be a blessing, but the consciousness that there is a God, over all, who pitieth us as a father pitieth his children? If, then, we had no God but the God which Calvinism presents to us, we could not account our existence a blessing, nor thank our Maker for it. This, indeed, is expressly admitted, and in so many words, by one of the best Calvinists, and one of the best Christians, who have ever lived. 'Now since this is the case,' says Dr. Watts, 'that the bulk of mankind are born to trouble and misery here, as Job, v. 7. and as we have sufficiently shown before; and if they are also most likely to run into sin and folly in this world, and misery in another, 'for almost the whole world lies in wickednes,' 1 John v. 19. and 'there are few who shall be saved,' Matth. vii. 14, this circumstance surely forbids our mere existence or entrance into such a life to be called *a blessing;* and consequently *we cannot reasonably give thanks merely on that account to the almighty being that made us.*'* Such were the unhappy conclusions to which this excellent man was led irresistibly by the interpretation which his system obliged him to put upon the word and providence of God.

But we have said enough, and much more than we intended, on this view of our subject. We think our readers must be satisfied, that whether the representations of Calvinism which Unitarians have given be true or false, it cannot be denied, that they have taken them from the highest Calvinistic authorities, without any colouring or exaggeration.

Still it may be objected to these representations, that they do not recognize and admit certain *metaphysical distinctions*, much relied on by Calvinists, and thought by them to relieve their system from all difficulties. But why is it that these distinctions have not been recognized and admitted? It is because they have been proved, again and again, to be utterly futile and unmeaning. Our limits will allow us to notice particularly but one of these distinctions; but it shall be that one, to which our

* Ruin and Recovery of Mankind. Works, 4to. London: 1753. vol. vi. p. 340.

opponents most confidently appeal, and which may in fact be considered as the foundation of all the others.

Calvinists tell us, that though we believe men to be born with a sinful nature, and though we believe God to be the real author of this sinful nature, still it is not necessary to suppose God is the author of the sinfulness of this nature, because 'there is not the least need of supposing any evil quality, *infused*, *implanted*, or *wrought into* the nature of man, by any *positive* cause or influence whatsoever.'* They account for Original Sin in the following manner. They suppose that *human nature*, *before the fall*, possessed the same natural appetites, desires, and affections as at present; that these existed in man while in a state of innocence; but were consistent with his being in a state of innocence, only because they were entirely controlled by the supernatural grace of God. But that *after the fall*, this supernatural grace was withdrawn from *human nature;* and *then* the sole and irresistible tendency of these natural principles was to sin. It is with this nature, whose sole tendency is to sin, that man is now created. But the nature of man has become so deplorably sinful, not through any positive act of God in infusing sin into man; but merely through a positive act in withdrawing his grace which had been justly forfeited; and without which human nature left to itself is capable only of sin. This statement, as made by Twiss and Edwards, and many other Calvinists, is not brought forward by them, as the conductors of the Spectator ignorantly suppose, in order to prove that human nature is not now thoroughly sinful, but only in order to justify God in respect to this fact, by explaining that it has become thus sinful only through a *privative*, and not through a *positive* act of his. The object of the statement is solely to vindicate God by the force of this distinction; and the only thing respecting it which presents a diffi-

* Edward's Doctrine of Original Sin. Works, vol. vi. p. 428. The distinction stated above is similar to that which is made by Calvinists respecting the doctrine of the divine decrees, according to which it is affirmed, in so many words, that God determines the will of man to every act of sin, but, at the same time, it is denied that he is the author of sin. So, for instance, Dr. Twiss: 'poterit etiam determinare voluntatem creaturae ad actum peccati, interim ut non fit auctor peccati. Lib. ii. p. 65. Calvin in his work on Predestination (De aeterna Dei praedestinatione) states in the strongest language, that the sins of men are *willed* by God, and produced by his operation on the hearts of men. (See particularly Tractatus Theologici. p. 626. seqq.)--Edwards gives us a still more characteristic display of his metaphysics in attempting to reconcile the doctrine of Imputation with reason and justice. (Doctrine of Orignal Sin part iv. chap. iii.) He tells us, that personal indentity in an individual is merely the result of an '*arbitrary constitution*' of God;--that I am responsible and punishable for the sins I committed yesterday merely in consequence of an arbitrary constitution of God. Consequently this same arbitrary constitution may make it just as reasonable and right, that I should be responsible and punishable for the sin which Adam committed six thousand years ago, as for the sin which I myself committed yesterday; for it is all a matter of arbitrary constitution.

culty and requires explanation, (and this difficulty we profess ourselves unable to explain,) is the phenomenon, that a man, whose common sense had not been annihilated, should in making such a statement, suppose he was uttering any thing but the most futile absurdity. I, a sinner, and nothing but a sinner, with no tendencies in the nature with which I am born, but irresistible tendencies to sin, and ruin, and eternal misery, ask how this constitution of things is reconcilable with the goodness of my Maker; and a Calvinistic metaphysician thinks he has given me an answer, when he says, that my nature, *considered as mere human nature*, is created in me, as it was created by God in Adam; that this nature, to be sure, can be restrained from continual sin only by supernatural grace, but that I have forfeited all claim to this grace by Adam's transgression; that God, therefore, has a right to withdraw it from me, but that in thus depriving me of what is necessary to save me, he does not 'enfuse, implant, or work into me any evil quality by any positive cause or influence whatsoever.'—If my nature, the nature with which I am born, the nature which I inherit, the nature that is created in *me*, be sinful, and if it has become so through an act of God, what possible difference can it make whether this act of God be supposed to have been a positive act, or a privative act,—whether it has consisted in adding something which has made my nature sinful, or in taking away something which has left my nature sinful. In either case, it is the actual constitution of God, my Maker, and presents, in either case, the same difficulty.

It is by distinctions as groundless and unmeaning as this, that Calvinists would blind and confound the understandings of their converts, and reconcile them to the palpable absurdities of their system. That these distinctions should be sufficient to satisfy the consciences of those who are determined to be Calvinists at all events, we do not wonder, because we know how very little is necessary to satisfy men's consciences in such cases. Nor is it matter of surprise that they should often have the effect to perplex and silence many honest minds, unused to this sort of metaphysical shuffling, and hardly able to believe but that their must be something, even though they cannot discern it, in what men bring forward with so much parade, and with such an air of confidence and triumph. But it can scarcely be expected, that much regard will be paid to these distinctions by those, to whom their utter futility has been again and again exposed. Let our opponents propose any distinction, even a metaphysical distinction, to relieve their system from embarrassment, and if it can be shown to be real and substantial one, Unitarians will not fail to

consider it in their views of Calvinism. We should, nevertheless, regard it as a very suspicious circumstance of any system, that it can only be defended by the help of metaphysical distinctions; and a very injurious circumstance, if the system, like that of Calvinism, be designed to have a practical bearing upon mankind in general; for the bulk of mankind are incapable of understanding such distinctions, supposing them to be real, so that to them the whole system, in itself considered, and in all its practical influences, will be the same in effect, as if those distinctions did not exist.

Many, however, will admit that we have given a fair representation of Calvinism as it *was*, but not of Calvinism as it *is*. But is not Calvinism one individual system, as much so as Christianity? Can there be two systems differing from one another, and yet each one be Calvinism, properly so called? We might as well talk of two Christianities. If, then, it be true, as it seems to be admitted, that we have given a fair representation of the old Calvinistic system, and still it should appear that, in doing this, we have not represented truly the opinions of the modern Orthodox of New-England, it would manifestly follow—not that we have misrepresented Calvinists, but that the modern Orthodox of New-England are not Calvinists. They may hold another system resembling Calvinism, and better than Calvinism, but not, unless our logic fails us, a system which shall be at once the same with Calvinism, and yet different from it.* If the Orthodox in this section of our country feel themselves to be aggrieved, because they have been represented as holding the principles and doctrines of Calvinism, let them renounce that system. Let them confess to the world that they have abandoned it. But let them not think to assume to themselves the credit among their own party of retaining the doctrines of the Reformation, as they improperly call them, and yet when these very doctrines are charged upon them by their opponents, fly into a passion and complain of being abused.

* Unitarians may, indeed, differ widely from one another, and from age to age, and still be strictly speaking Unitarians. But the case is not a parallel one. Unitarianism does not consist, like Calvinism, of a *system of doctrines*, in which it is necessary that each particular doctrine should be understood in one particular acceptation in order to make the system consistent in itself. Neither is it proposed, like Calvinism, as a *System of Religion*, properly so called, framed with a view to give one particular explication of the divine economy; so that to put another construction upon Calvinism is the same thing to all intents and purposes, as to explain the divine economy by another system. Unitarianism, as such, consists in the belief of *one single doctrine*, namely, the absolute personal unity of God; so that in whatever form this doctrine is held, and however connected, (provided nothing is held inconsistent with this one doctrine,) it makes the person, who thus holds it, strictly speaking a Unitarian.

It is generally known that since the days of Edwards, a part, and latterly, we believe, a majority, of the clergymen reputedly Orthodox in New-England, have used a different language respecting certain tenets of Calvinism from what would formerly have been deemed admissible. But our opponents, in their sense of the high importance of this class of theologians, have entirely forgotten, that the Calvinism of the straitest creeds is still the Calvinism *publicly professed* by the great body of Calvinistic Churches in our country. The Westminster Confession and Catechisms are the *public standards of faith* of the whole Presbyterian Church in the United States. This same Confession is the standard of all the Scotch churches in America; nay, it is the foundation of the Saybrook Platform, which does not vary from it in the softening of any doctrine; and this Saybrook Platform, which was reprinted under the inspection of the General Association in 1810, is the professed standard of the Calvinism of Connecticut. The Reformed Dutch Churches in America still use the Confesssion of the famous Synod of Dort. Moreover, it is but about ten or twelve years since a book was published, which made some noise at the time, and which was received with much favour by the great body of Calvinists in the middle and southern states, in which book the doctrines of Calvinism are stated in as broad and offensive a form, as in any work which we recollect to have read. With these facts before us we cannot think that in opposing Calvinism, properly so called, we are as one who beateth the air, or that we are engaged in adjusting and controverting 'the creed of dead men.' We must also express our surprise, that it did not occur to Professor Stuart and Dr. Woods, before they accused Dr. Channing of misrepresenting *their* sentiments, that his sermon was prepared for, and of course accommodated to the state of religious opinion in a city, where the distinguishing peculiarities of the orthodox clergy in New-England were known to be almost as obnoxious as his own, leaving him no occasion to expose, or combat them, or even to bring them into view.

Dr. Woods is pleased to say that 'If there is any principle respecting the moral government of God, which the Orthodox clergy in New-England earnestly labour to inculcate, it is this; that, as accountable beings, *we have a conscience, and a power of knowing and performing our duty.* Our zeal in defence of this principle has been such, as to occasion no small umbrage to some, who are attached to every feature and every phraseology of Calvinism. On this subject there is, in fact, a well known difference between our views, and those of some modern, as well as more ancient Divines, who rank high on the side Orthodoxy,

I urge it therefore, as a matter of justice, that how earnestly soever the Author of this Sermon [Dr. C.] might have been disposed to censure the opinions of others, he ought to have made an express exception in *our* favour.'*

With respect to the differences, here intimated as existing between the nominal Calvinists of New England, and Calvinists elsewhere, we, of course, if we thought them material, should be the first to wish to put them upon record; and our only fear would be, that by continually recurring to the subject, we might expose ourselves to the imputation of attempting, in an unworthy manner, to promote groundless divisions and jealousies among our opponents. One distinction, however, we cheerfully award to the Orthodox in this quarter. The ability, and erudition, and, not less so, the spirit discovered by the gentlemen of Andover, in their late controversial writings, reflect much credit on the state of theological learning in that place, and when these writings are compared with similar publications by the Calvinists at the South, the contrast, to be sure, is sufficiently striking, and to the latter gentlemen, we should think, sufficiently humiliating and mortifying. But as to any real differences in opinion, so far as at present developed, we confess we find nothing in them like a considerable approach towards the truth. The orthodoxy of Calvin, or the orthodoxy of the Assembly's Catechism, or the orthodoxy of President Edwards, or the orthodoxy of Dr. Woods —they are alike incapable of being reconciled with reason, with known facts respecting human nature, with the goodness of God, or with man's accountability.† Take for example the boasted distinction of New England orthodoxy, intimated above in the extract from Dr. Woods;—that, in opposition to proper Calvinism, it recognizes and asserts man's ability And so indeed it does man's *natural* ability; but it denies, as stoutly as Calvinism itself, his *moral* ability, that is, his ability to do a morally good action

* Letters to Unitarians, p. 130.

† We did intend to shew this more at length in this review; but our limits will not permit. We can refer our readers for information on this subject to Ely's *Contrast between Calvinism and Hopkinsianism.* Suffice it, for the present, to say that the principal change which Calvinism has undergone, consists in an attempt to accommodate it a little more, at least in appearance, to the improved state of biblical science and the philosophy of the mind. This has been done, for the most part, by altering the phraseology on some points without any material change of the idea, and introducting a score more of metaphysical distinctions, the common subterfuges of Calvinism. More use is also made of the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity;—a doctrine, which when applied to God as well as man, and made to run through all things, may do well enough as a philosophical doctrine, that is to say, it may not imply any absurdity or inconsistency; but when this doctrine is mixed up with the Calvinistic doctrines of Atonement, Justification, Election, and special and unconditional grace, it is difficult to conceive of a mass of more discordant materials gathered together, and dignified with the name of a system.

without a supernatural interposition of God; and in this denial it incumbers itself with the whole weight of the difficulty and objection urged against Calvinism, properly so called.

One advantage may, indeed, result from the frequent allusions in this controversy to the partial abandonment of Calvinism by the Orthodox of New England. Many honest disciples of the Genevan school, who up to this time have regarded all their distinctive peculiarities as equally true and indisputable, will be not a little startled at some of the apparent concessions, that are now made by their own leaders. And when they read in their own books, that many of the old fashioned doctrines of Calvinism, which but yesterday were deemed essential parts of the system, must now be abandoned before the increasing light, that is bursting in upon God's word and the human mind, it is a chance, if they are not led to anticipate the effect, which the operation of the same cause will have, in consigning what still remains of the system to the same inevitable doom.

Here we might close our review. But as we have thought proper to connect a pamphlet, purporting to be a Review taken from the Christian Spectator, with this controversy, we feel that it would be doing wrong to let it pass without some special animadversions. Especially as we cannot suppose, that Professor Norton himself will notice in any manner whatever an anonymous publication of such a character.

In this Review, the Conductors of the Spectator have entirely given up the point in dispute, and abandoned the original ground of the controversy. They first charged Professor Norton with a deliberate and intentional misrepresentation of Calvinism, because he described it, as 'a religion which teaches that God has formed men, so that they are by nature inclined to all moral evil.' But now they come forward themselves, and propose it as, a doctrine in which 'all who take the denomination of Calvinists will agree, that mankind come into the world in such a state, that without the interposition of divine grace, all as soon as they become moral agents, sin in every accountable act.'* Now where lies the difference between their statement and Mr. Norton's, except that he uses the expression, 'God has formed men,' and they use the expression, 'mankind come into the world?' We may then offer them an alternative, similar to one which Mr. Norton has offered them before. If they will deny that when men 'come into the world,' they are *created;* or that when '*created*,' they are '*formed of God;*' then they may pre-

* Review, p. 23.

tend, that *their* doctrine is incorrectly stated, when it is affirmed to be, that 'God has formed men, so that they are by nature inclined to all moral evil.' Otherwise they cannot.

Again; in their first attack there were several passages like the following.—'We are often compelled to complain, that the opponents of Calvinism never fairly attack its doctrines, as they are stated by Calvin himself, or exhibited in the creeds of the churches, or the writings of the authors, who bear his name.' This was an appeal to the proper authorities; and those, of course, which Professor Norton made use of in his answer to their charge. But, beaten upon this ground, the conductors of the Spectator now turn round and say:—'What Calvin believed and taught, and what any modern Calvinistic authors have taught, are questions of no real importance in the present discussion, any further than their opinions are proved to be prevalent in our own country. If, therefore, the Professor of Sacred Literature in Cambridge University thinks it an object worthy of his zeal and labour to collect and expose the opinions of other centuries, or even the individual opinions of some in our own age, let him have the candour frankly to acquaint the public with his design.'* Such are some of the instances which these writers have given of tergiversation.

But they are quite as ready at stratagem, as at retreat. In pretending to impugn the proposition of Mr. Norton, that Calvinism teaches, 'that God creates men with a sinful nature,' the conductors of the Christian Spectator, have, according to their custom, substituted another proposition in its place, and represented the question between them and him as being, whether Calvinism teaches, that God is the *cause* of the *sinfulness* of man's nature. All that they have said bears only on the latter proposition. There is, we confess, no difference in effect between the two propositions; but Calvinists have made a wide difference between them, as we have noticed above, and not pretending to deny the former, have resolutely denied the latter. This Calvinistic distinction, unmeaning and futile as it is, Mr. N. has scrupulously regarded. No real Calvinist ever denied that the nature which men bring with them into existence, that is, the nature with which they are created, is thoroughly sinful; and this is all Professor N. has affirmed. Many Calvinists, it is true, have denied, that God by a positive act is the cause of this sinfulness, and the conductors of the Spectator, adduce this denial to disprove the assertion of Professor N. though in fact he never asserted what is here denied. If it is by such artifices,

* Review, p. 26.

that these gentleman propose to defend their cause, we have done with them.

There is in this Review a singular jumbling together of propositions so inconsistent and contradictory in their very terms, that, when compared together, they present nothing but a series of absurdities. We give a specimen that happens to open before us, p. 11. In commenting on a passage of Calvin, the reviewers say; 'Professor N. may ask * * * are not men as really created by God now, as Adam was, and if [as Calvin asserts in the passage which is the subject of comment] *they came into the world with a corrupt nature*, is not God the author of that corrupt nature? We answer, not of necessity; it may be, and Calvin, to say the least, might believe, that men now are the voluntary authors of their own corruption, as Adam was of his own corruption.' Neither Calvin nor any one else, we imagine, except a believer in the doctrine of pre-existence, could suppose that men are the voluntary authors of that corruption, with which they come into the world.—Again, the two following sentences occur in the same paragraph, p. 6. 'Calvin says that *Original* Sin [vitium originis, the sin with which we are born,] is the *hereditary* depravity and corruption of our *nature*.' But he 'might have been as philosophical in his opinions as Unitarians are, and yet have believed that men *make* their whole nature corrupt, and that this *thus* becomes a seed of sin even in infancy.' That is to say, he might have been so philosophical as to believe, that men produce that corruption of their own natures, with which they are born, and inherit hereditary depravity from themselves. These are pretty fair specimens of the consistency, perspicuity, and precision of the writers of this review; and yet they have the effrontery to say in the very commencement of it, whether in earnest or in jest, we will not pretend to assert,—'the strength of orthodoxy lies in that accuracy of statement, which shall expose by its own perspicuity and precision, the misrepresentations and evasions of its doctrines.'

No sort of reliance can be placed upon the account, which these reviewers give of the individual opinions of any writer, whom they cite. Of Turretin, for example, they would give their readers to understand, that he regarded original sin, as consisting merely, in a 'state of privation,' p. 5, and that he did not regard as sinful, the nature of a man as created. The truth with respect to this writer is, that knowing nothing of him but two quotations which they found in Ridgeley's Body of Divinity, (their great storehouse of knowledge on the subject in controversy,) and these being quotations unluckily of such a character, and so introduced, as to be very likely to lead one into mistake, the re-

viewers referred to him confidently in support of opinions, which no Calvinist ever held, and which are expressly contradicted on the very page of Turrettin from which Ridgeley's quotations are taken. Turrettin* (in his Locus ix. Quaest. 12. De Propagatione Peccati,) undertakes to answer the question: 'How is original sin propagated from parents to children?'—'We may answer this question,' says he, 'in two ways, either *generally*, or *particularly*. In the first place, *generally*, that the mode of this propagation is an impure generation, by which those who are corrupt and sinners produce a corrupt and sinful offspring. For as a man generates a man, and a leprous person a leprous child, so it ought not to seem strange, that *a sinner should beget a sinner*.' 'It is no objection to this,' he says, 'that it would seem that a *moral quality cannot be propagated* by natural generation. For, &c. &c.' His *particular* answer is; That there are three steps in the propagation of sin. The first is conception. The next step is the creation of the soul, 'which is created by God without any stain, *sine ulla labe*, but destitute of original righteousness, neither *pure*, nor *impure*, but *not pure*.' It is from what is said by Turrettin in relation merely to this branch of the subject, the creation of the soul, that Ridgeley's quotations are taken, which the reviewer has unwittingly supposed, give a view of the whole of his doctrine. But the third step, still to come, in the propagation of sin, consists "in the union of the soul with the body, for then sin, which had existed only in its beginnings and rudiments, assumes its proper form, and is completed. As *man is constituted man* by this union, so also sin is made complete, consisting *not merely in privation*, the want of original righteousness, but having also *a positive nature in the existence of an opposite state of iniquity*.'

Here too we may adduce the authority of Turrettin in direct contradiction to a statement made by this reviewer, the substance of which he repeats over and over again, and which seems indeed to be essential to his argument. In order to prove something, we cannot say what, he says, p. 6: 'Calvin explicitly affirms that original sin comprises perversity of heart and also personal wickedness, terms which *were never used by any writer* to denote any thing but *voluntary* states of mind, and which according to every just principle of interpretation, as *necessarily suppose the moral agency of the subject, as they do his existence*.' Now, strange as it may seem, Turrettin—this writer whom to use the elegant expression of the reviewer, nobody can 'flout,' and certainly one in the highest rank of Calvinistic authorities—makes it his special purpose in Locus IX.,† Quaest. 2. as professed in

* Institutio Theolog. Elenct. Lugd. 4to. 1696. p. 706 and seqq. † Ibid. p. 652.

the title of this part, to prove, *against the Papists and Socinians*, that it is NOT of the essence of sin that it should be voluntary, or that the agent should act knowingly and willingly. 'It is not true,' says he, 'that all sin is voluntary. For this cannot be said of original sin, which *precedes all use of the will, or of liberty;* and which, though it exists in the will as the subject of it, yet does not derive its origin from it.' Such is unequivocally the doctrine of Calvinism, and of all Calvinistic authorities; with which fact the assertions and insinuations and reasonings of this reviewer may be compared. How far, in all this, it may be charitable and right to suppose him only under a mistake, we leave it for his own conscience, and the judgment of our readers to determine.

Once more; according to this reviewer, p. 9., President Edwards, when he speaks of the state in which man comes into the world as involving 'a propensity, tendency, proneness, liability, &c.' 'does not decide' 'whether this tendency, disposition, proneness, &c. be a voluntary or involuntary state of mind, *whether the subject be accountable for it, or not.*' Again on the same page: 'Thus he [President Edwards] does not assert that this propensity is in itself *sinful, and deserving of punishment.*' These assertions, though essential to the course of his argument, so far as we can understand it, are entirely false. On the contrary, Edwards lays it down as an axiom in the first chapter of his work on Original Sin,* that 'all *moral qualities*,' (all therefore which can render one sinful, and deserving of punishment,) 'all principles of virtue or vice lie in the *disposition* of the heart.' Having assumed this, he says, he shall proceed to 'consider whether we have any evidence, that the heart of man is naturally of a corrupt and evil disposition.' This, he says, is what is 'strenuously denied by many who are enemies to the doctrine of original sin.' He then immediately unfolds the main argument. 'The way we come by the idea of any such thing as *disposition* or *tendency*,' (evidently regarding the words as synonymous in relation to his subject, as, of course, they must be,) 'is by observing what is constant or general in event.' He says, that he does not know that it is expressly denied by any, 'that if in the course of events, it universally or generally proves, that mankind are actually corrupt, this would be evidence of a *prior* corrupt *propensity* in the world of mankind.' Edwards here evidently uses the words 'disposition,' 'tendency,' and 'propensity,' as equivalent, and makes all moral qualities to lie in the disposition, tendency, or propensity of the heart. But in the heart, according to Edwards, there is, *prior* to any evil acts, a disposition, tendency, or propensity to all evil, and to nothing but evil. Prior to any evil acts, therefore the heart is thoroughly sinful,

* Works vol. vi. p. 130.

and man deserves the extreme of punishment.—So clearly and expressly, in the very outset of his work, does Edwards contradict the statements of the reviewer respecting him. But the whole tenour of his book, and many particular passages, equally plain with that just given, are in such direct opposition to the statements of this writer, that we confess we cannot reconcile them with his honesty, except on the supposition, that he has never read the book he professes to quote.

There is another characteristic of this writer quite as marked as any we have mentioned. In p. 15, he says, 'Professor N. then, *has never had any doubt* that Calvinistic writers abundantly contradict the doctrine, that God creates men with a sinful nature.' * * * 'If Calvinists, *as Mr. N. concedes*, have abundantly denied the doctrines charged upon them,' &c.—On the contrary, those who will take the trouble to look, will find that Mr. N. says, 'It would, I confess, be a strange thing, if Calvin, or the Westminster Divines, or Edwards had any where EXPRESSLY contradicted the doctrines of their creed; and of consequence if any express contradiction was to be found of those passages, which I have produced from their writings in which these doctrines are stated. None such has been brought forward by the conductors of the Spectator.' We had marked several other instances of equally gross prevarication in the reviewer's references to Mr. N.

But we are absolutely sick of exposing the errors and misstatements of this writer. The Conductors of the Christian Spectator may complain ever so piteously of the hard treatment, which they may think they have received from Mr. Norton; but if they continue to lend their columns and their name to publications like the one before us, it is difficult to conceive of any treatment, which shall be too hard in the way of severity. They should remember, too, that they commenced the attack by charging Mr. N. with a *gross*, *deliberate and intentional* misrepresentation. This charge was either true or false. The turpitude of a base calumny was to attach somewhere. Mr. Norton had but one alternative before him, either to bear it himself, or throw it back upon his accuser. The latter he has done with complete success; and he has only done it with the severity, which the occasion justified and demanded. We do not use, nay we do not think it right to use, the same language towards a convicted calumniator, which might justly be expected from us towards one who is merely in an error, or, perhaps, has committed an indiscretion. The severity, therefore, with which Mr. Norton has exposed the errors and absurdities of a writer, who took advantage of an anonymous publication to defame his moral character, has left no honest mind any other cause of regret, but that the correction has not been received more meekly, and with better promise of amendment.

INTELLIGENCE.

MASSACHUSETTS CONVENTION.

The Massachusetts Convention of Congregational Ministers was attended this year by more than two hundred clergymen; a number probably much greater than had assembled at any previous meeting of that body. The usual business relating to the charitable object of the association was transacted. Dr. Pierce, of Brookline, was chosen second preacher for the next year. The convention attended religious services at the church in Brattle-square, and listened to an excellent discourse by Dr. Woods, of Andover, from 2 Cor. x. 4. The preacher considered the nature of the Christian warfare; the appropriate instruments for conducting it; and the manner in which they ought to be employed; and exhibited a view of his subject, and discussed it in a spirit, highly creditable to himself, and universally gratifying, as far as we are informed, to his numerous audience. After divine service the convention dined together at the invitation of the Boston churches. The collection at the meeting-house, was $314, 91.

The matter of the greatest interest which came before the convention at this meeting, was the report of the committee appointed in 1822, to prepare an answer to the question proposed by the North Worcester Association; 'What is a christian church, with which we ought to hold communion as such?' We have forborne to allude before to this affair, because we have supposed that it might become necessary for us to bring it to the notice of our readers with some formality, and we were unwilling to create an apprehension which might be spared, or to have the appearance of wishing to excite a prejudice. In the course of it, we have become acquainted with several facts, with which the event dispenses us from acquainting the public. But as it has now become a subject of general curiosity, we are called upon to give some account of the proceeding, and of our own views in relation to it.

At the meeting of the Convention in May, 1821, an application was presented from the Old Colony Association, for an answer to the question; 'What is a Congregational church, with which we may have fellowship as such?' In reply to a doubt which arose as to the existence of any such association, Rev. Mr. Torrey, of Plymouth, its scribe, named the three gentlemen who composed it, and attested its vote, directing the application which had been made. After some conversation, in which it was strongly urged, that the consideration of such questions was foreign to the objects of the conven-

tion, and would be fruitful of inconvenience to it, and of evil to the church at large, the application was laid over to be acted on the next year. The next year (1822) it was not made, but the North Worcester Association proposed the question, 'What is a Christian church, with which we ought to hold communion as such?' Similar arguments to those which had been used the preceding year, were urged against sustaining this application. It was sustained, however, by a vote, taken by yeas and nays, of 87 against 68. A committee of thirteen was then chosen to consider the question and report a reply to the next convention. In the choice of this committee, about 70 members took no part, either retiring from the room, or forbearing to vote. It was composed of twelve gentlemen reputed orthodox, with Dr. Bancroft, of Worcester, who had not attended the meeting. An ineffectual attempt was then made to procure an order of the convention, that the committee, having prepared its report, should either publish it by printing, or should transmit copies to the several associations of the commonwealth, previously to the next meeting of the convention. To the reason given for this, that the few hours which the meeting was expected to occupy, did not afford sufficient opportunity to prepare for the discussion of topics so important as were likely to be presented, Dr. Stuart, of Andover, replied, that the ultimate decision would not be hastened, but that after being presented, the report would be permitted to lie over to another year.

The report was accordingly presented at the late meeting. It proposed, as was expected by many, a doctrinal test. The committee take for their basis, that we ought to have fellowship with every true christian church, and that a christian church is a society constituted of christians. Christians they declare to be those who embrace the christian religion. A just statement of the great principles of christianity, therefore, they conceive to be the proper standard for determining the application of the christian name. Such a statement, according to their views of our religion, they proceed to make; and conclude with disclaiming any pretension to authority in matters of religious belief, and asserting the right of the ministers in convention to announce their own opinions.

The report being read, Dr. Stuart, in allusion to the motion which he had opposed the preceding year, said he was now willing that the report should be printed, and made a motion to that effect. This motion was superseded by another; 'That the convention will take no further order on the subject;' which after two or three ineffectual attempts to adjourn to the next day, prevailed.

Our readers must not expect us to represent this as a triumph of our distinguishing opinions. We are far more happy to represent it as a triumph of those venerable protestant principles, which we cherish no more fondly than they are cherished in many a clear and honest mind, which will not speculate with ours; principles which we trust in God he will never leave us to betray, and which,

if need be, we now expect to defend by the side of men, with whom, however often we may differ, we are always proud and pleased to sympathize and co-operate. There is a no inconsiderable number of men and ministers among us, who have been too much left out of the account in these bustling times; who can be content to maintain their opinions without being greedy to impose them; who can enjoy the fragrance of their orthodoxy without making others feel its thorns; for whom independence is enough without power, and who have as jealous a fear of any encroachment upon conscience, as if they were in danger of being the first sufferers from the usurpation. Such men have never had any thing to complain of at our hands: and if we ever had wronged them by a prejudice or a jealousy, it would have been with no common feelings of compunction that we should have deplored and abjured the injustice, when we came to stand by them in defence of those good old Congregational principles, to which it is far less honourable in us than in them, with their orthodox predilections, to adhere. We may live a long time without experiencing again a sensation so grateful as when we found ourselves standing with them on the substantial common ground of attachment to that christian liberty, which, from the date of her earliest religious institutions, has made the glory of New-England. We would cheerfully encounter much more anxiety than the subject has ever given us, for the sake of the happiness of such a relief.

The anxiety which we have felt was in no degree of a personal nature Except as, from our situation, our exertions were pledged to avert the evil, we are not conscious of feeling any other solicitude than ought to have been felt by every religious or public-spirited man. We did feel concern in the prospect of that vast amount of evil speaking which seemed to threaten the community. We did feel concern when we saw a blow aimed at the spirit of Congregationalism in its very citadel. To some who would deprecate the mischief as much as ourselves, it may now seem that the attempt scarcely justified such anxiety. But we do not forget that danger is not a little increased by the fact that it is apt to be called, first, too trifling to be regarded, and, next, too formidable to be opposed. It is not many years since a tolerably promising project to erect a tribunal over the churches was defeated by an eminent individual's able and well-timed labours in exposing its real character. The General Association of Massachusetts was the feeble offspring of that ambitious enterprize. While this mimic of a Presbyterian synod holds its meetings, and receives delegates from the Presbyteries of the south, young men who possibly may not have laid down at the threshold of New England the biasses of their Presbyterian education, or of their intimate Presbyterian connexions, are coming from time to time to preach and be settled in our churches. In what character do these gentlemen come among us? for they would charge us with disrespect for their understandings if we

should imply that they think the difference between the Congregational and the Presbyterian systems immaterial. They doubtless believe it to be either a great advantage or a great evil, to be connected with a General Assembly having authority in controversies of faith and proceedings of discipline. Have they then renounced their Presbyterian partialities, and do they come among us prepared for the cordial support of our institutions? If so, we welcome them heartily to share in the enjoyment and defence of that religious liberty, the once dearly bought patrimony of our churches. But if not, let them not touch our ark. They ought not to be willing to be its guardians, and they must not hope to make it their spoil.

If there must be any body possessed of a power which may be abused to make us act against our sense of duty, profess against our sense of truth, and believe against scripture and our common sense, we think we would soonest of all have a bishop. He is a man, and may be melted; a conspicuous man, and may be alarmed. Next to this, the least intolerable tyranny known to Christian sects is that of a Presbytery; for though this is a body, each member of which may well have some interest, theory or whim to stimulate, and can scarcely have any strong sense of personal responsibleness to check him, there is still some security in the possible opposition of clerical and lay opinions. The last authority of all to which we should be willing to submit in any degree our freedom of conscience, would be a body composed of ecclesiastics merely; men of theory, from their retired and speculative habits; likely to love power, from the consciousness of intellectual advantages, and yet forbidden by the decorum of their profession from engaging in the contest for it on the same arena with other men; confident and determined, from the deference they are in the habit of receiving; and able with better success than others, to defend any thing they may do, by that plea of a sense of duty, which always commands respect, and is difficult to confute. So far is Congregationalism from countenancing any such authority, that in an ecclesiastical council,—which is the only tribunal it recognizes,—the advisory power,—which is all that a council possesses,—is trusted to ministers and laymen together; and even these are expressly delegated by the brethren in church meeting with some special commission, the terms of which, prescribing and limiting their duty, are first named by the party or parties which ask their intervention. So opposed to the order, usages and principles of the Congregational church, was the attempt to induce the ministers to establish a doctrinal test.

We have never been alarmists, for we have always had great confidence in the salutary power of public opinion. If it had been otherwise, we should find our minds at ease after our late experience. In the collection of the Massachusetts clergy, which this occasion brought together, we saw mild and venerable men, 'not following with us,' who had never been wanting in vigilance and never been deceived; who came to frown on this rash attempt,

and who, before it had succeeded, would have let it be plainly seen that the spirit of 1630 is not quite extinct. There were other well-intentioned, but less wary men, who,—inconsiderately submitting themselves to the guidance of more impetuous spirits, in whom they placed confidence,—were imperceptibly led on to a point, where they found an alternative presented to them which a more timely circumspection would have led them to avoid. Their eyes being opened on the critical situation into which they had been led, they took the course which in the emergency was most honourable to them, and would advance no further. There were others perhaps, who would themselves have been well enough pleased to persevere, but who were awed by the decided expression of the public sentiment, which it was impossible the lapse of a year should not have given them opportunity to collect. And there were others, less observant of the 'signs of the times,' or less apprehensive of witnessing their fulfilment, who were faithful to the project to the last. But they found themselves the smaller number; and, unless we are deceived, their imprudence in this case has so shaken the confidence that had been reposed in them, that they will find it harder in future to engage, in any such attempt, numbers enough to make it formidable. The more ardent of a party are naturally its leaders, till some check occasioned by their temerity exposes their incompetence, and then their ascendancy is not easily regained.

As consistent Protestants,—as fast friends to those two great doctrines of the reformers, the sufficiency of the scriptures and the right of private judgment, we congratulate the churches and the public on this result. It is chiefly to the assertion of those principles, when they could only be asserted at great sacrifices and hazard, that we owe our political liberties; and it is wholly to them that we are indebted for our religious light. We are under too great obligations to them to see without distress any attempt to impair their authority. We are principled Congregationalists, because that system is consistent Protestantism. Doubtless we value the views of religion which distinguish us from many of our Congregational brethren, because in our minds they are identified with sacred truth. But the spirit, which we consider them eminently calculated to produce, we cheerfully acknowledge that we witness in many, who do not regard them in the same light with ourselves; and therefore, though we deplore the prevalence of a sentiment opposed to religious truth, we have less apprehensions from it, than from any restraint on those private rights of conscience, which seem to us indispensable to the prevalence at once of religious truth and of the religious spirit. To impose a human standard on the conscience, is to destroy the sense of obligation, so far as it is religious, in withholding it from God, and directing it to men; and such an attempt, come from what quarter or in what shape it may, is a specimen of what we have learned most to dread in popery.

THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

NEW SERIES—No. 28.

July and August, 1823.

[The following discourse is printed at the request and under the direction of the Executive Committee of the Society, before whom it was delivered. It was heard with great satisfaction, and we hope that its publication in the Disciple may accomplish the design of the writer, by exciting increased attention and patronage to the interesting institution, whose plan and objects it exhibits.]

A SERMON PREACHED AT CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS, MAY 15th, 1823, AT THE SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE "EVANGELICAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN MASSACHUSETTS." BY DAVID DAMON, A. M. Minister of the Church in Lunenburg, Massachusetts.

ROM. x. 14, 15.

How shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?

IT is my *first* object, on this occasion, to present some considerations in favour of missionary exertions in general. I shall then endeavour to state the particular objects and claims of the Society, who hold their semi-annual meeting this day.

In the first place, then, I am to present some considerations in favour of missionary exertions generally.

What I have to suggest upon this topic, may be arranged under the following general considerations or heads, viz.:

1. The Christian religion is adapted to be a universal religion.

2. There are indications, that the Christian religion will in fact prevail universally, or become the religion of mankind at large.

3. The Christian religion is adapted to promote the happiness of those who embrace it.

2. In the efforts, which missionary associations are now making, the probable means of extending the Christian religion are included.

1. The Christian religion is adapted to be a univeral religion; to be the religion of the world of mankind. It relates to principles and circumstances which are common to all men; and when it has reference to the peculiarities of any age or nation, it is for the sake of argument or illustration, or something which is auxiliary to its main design. Its grand outlines are drawn over and occupy what may be called common ground. Such for instance are its precepts. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you. Forgive and ye shall be forgiven. Judge not, that ye be not judged. Let all your things be done with charity. Quench not the spirit.' These precepts are not adapted to any particular age, or nation, or rank exclusively, but to all men. Such for instance are its promises and threatenings. 'Whosoever believeth in me shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.' Such for instance is the nature of the rewards and punishments which it proposes as sanctions. 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.' It is absolute happiness and misery which are proposed. Their nature is defined sufficiently to affect the imaginations of those, who would not be affected by the mere use of general terms, while there is still so much obscurity left in the definitions, that none can imagine themselves destitute of a deep interest in them, on account of their individual tastes or habits. The Christian religion takes hold of and acts upon principles common to human nature, in the actual state in which it is found in human society. It does not suppose a sinner, in whose character there is an unusual combination of vile habits and enormous crimes, constituting him a moral monster, and make provision for his conversion and restoration exclusively; but provision is made for all sinners, and invitation is extended to all to partake of it. Neither does it lay down special precepts for forming a character of exalted excellence for a particular station, which never existed, or which but one among many millions of the human race can occupy; but it aims at raising all to moral excellence, whatever may be the stations assigned them in providence. Also, it does not enumerate a great variety of outward acts to be done or avoided, which must vary considerably with the different circumstances of individuals;

but it aims directly at the seat of moral action, which is the heart, since, if the moving power be regulated aright, the motions will be right. Hence it treats of powers, capacities, desires and passions which are common to all men.

These general objects of the gospel revelation are, indeed, pursued in a great variety of methods. Sometimes the general rule with one or more particular examples or illustrations is given, and men are left to make the application in other instances for themselves; and sometimes it is left to them to infer the general rule from a particular example or illustration. But in all cases the real and generally the most obvious end aimed at is something of a general nature, in which mankind do, or ought to feel a common interest.

Its ordinances are of the same nature. There is nothing in them to distinguish nation from nation, or sect from sect, but only Christians from those who are not Christians, and this in the simplest manner possible; and, besides, the moral aim and tendency of the same are at once general and striking. Hence likewise there are no such particular rules for the outward worship and discipline of the church, as we might expect to find in a religion designed to be national, or, still more, particular rather than universal. Much is left to be varied and settled in successive ages, upon the principle of expediency, with the help of inferences from very general rules. Thus it broke down the partition wall which once existed, that there might be no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. The very model of devotion which our Saviour furnished at the request of his disciples, shows that his religion was intended for men as such;—not for rulers and magistrates only, but for their subjects also, and not for the latter to the exclusion of the former, because God will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Therefore he will have all men to pray, and all to be prayed for; and all to pray and to intercede for those things which all men need daily, and those which all men ought to wish for continually. Nor may we omit to mention expressly what has already been frequently implied, that the Saviour's interposition was intended for the benefit of all promiscuously, and not for any class or nation exclusively. This appears from a great variety of expressions relating to every part of his mediation, and his sufferings and death more particularly, such as,—'He died for all—he tasted death for every man—behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the *world*.' The contrasts and dissimilitudes between the Christian religion and all others show the same thing more strikingly. Many systems of paganism

can exist only among a barbarous people; many sceptical systems only among a refined people. Even the Jewish religion, which was of divine origin, is rendered incapable of becoming a universal religion, by its ritual alone. The Christian religion has none of these incumbrances. It can exist entire in a monarchy or in a republic, under any meridian, and within any of the five zones; and among those who are exclusively pastoral, or agricultural, or commercial in their pursuits, or are raised by their particular circumstances above the necessity of any common pursuit as a means of living: And it attempts no alterations in previous habits, or pursuits, or opinions, excepting when some moral good is to be accomplished by the alteration. It does, indeed, suppose a certain degree of information; and the common enjoyment of a certain measure of the means of information. But it can be communicated, in some measure, even to barbarians; and the least measure has an elevating and saving tendency, the effects of which lay a foundation for further communications of it;—so that the actual existence of barbarous nations is no objection to the position which we would maintain. It only shows, that with Christianity we should endeavour to impart civilization; and that a certain portion of the latter affords many facilities for progagating the former in any place to which it has not been previously extended.

2. There are indications, that the Christian religion will in fact prevail universally, or become the religion of mankind at large.

Its very adaptation to the actual exigencies common to man is one indication. Others are found in the express language of scripture—in the prophecies relating to the Christian dispensation in the old testament, in the commission given to the apostles in the new testament, and in the prophetic passages of the new testament also. Quotation here is attended with difficulties, not through the scarcity, but the abundance of passages which present themselves for selection; and perhaps it is unnecessary. It is readily conceded that many prophetic passages, which some interpreters have supposed to refer to a future general prevalence of Christianity, received their fulfilment in the age of the apostles and their immediate successors. But there are other passages, which many still understand as referring to a future period, and which do not seem to be capable of a different construction, without violence done to common rules of interpretation. In the place of many quotations and references, suffer me to refer you to the last chapter of the prophet Daniel, and the concluding parts of some of the preceding chapters of the same book.

There are aspects in the present state of the world, which, viewed in connexion with prophecy, past events and the acknowledged genius of Christianity, are indications of the same future event. Christianity has survived a long night of darkness. Ever since the dawn of the reformation it has been gradually returning to its primitive purity and power. Lately it has again begun to extend its boundaries, not on one only, but on almost every side; and the prospect of a more rapid extension, in the coming age, is particularly encouraging. The successive revelations, which God has been pleased to make to mankind, and all history, conspire in showing that the development of God's plan of mercy towards mankind has been gradual, and in creating a belief that he will gradually raise the human race, considered collectively, to the degree of knowledge and moral excellence, of which they are capable in the present incipient and imperfect stage of their being. All these considerations combined lay a foundation for a strong conviction that the Christian religion is destined by its Author to become ultimately the religion of the world.

3. The Christian religion is adapted to promote the happiness of those who embrace it.

Here again I shall be permitted to avail myself of the argument arising from the establishment of my former positions. That which God has adapted to the common nature and exigencies of mankind, and probably destined to prevail universally, must be presumed to contribute to human happiness; else where could we find proofs of the divine wisdom and benevolence? But the matter is not left to inference, however fairly and conclusively it may be drawn. Experiment has decided it. In the first ages of Christianity, wherever it went, it made a great and glorious change for the better, both in the state of society, and in the condition, characters and prospects of individuals. Idolatry, superstition, idle ceremonies, gross vices, idleness, and avarice were, to a remarkable degree, laid aside; and the great body of the primitive Christians were pious, simple in their faith and worship, industrious, contented, thankful, peaceable, generous, pure, and benevolent. Even after platonic philosophy and popish usurpation began again the work of moral corruption and intellectual degradation in the bosom of the church, the good effects of Christianity were visible, and never wholly ceased to exist. How much happiness, then, must reformed or protestant Christianity confer, when it shall be universally prevalent? and how great are the advantages, in point of happiness, which Christian protestant nations do actually enjoy, compared with the rest of mankind. We may presume that those among us, who consider

the difference of but little value, know little of the value of their own privileges, and less of the actual state of Jews, Mahometans and Pagans.

It will not cool the ardour of a true philanthropist to object, that God requires of all according to what he bestows, and not according to what he withholds; and that multitudes may be saved through Christ, who never hear of his name or his religion in this life. For how do we know, that the intensity of future happiness in them who are saved, will not be in proportion to the increased knowledge and elevation of character which are associated with the prevalence of Christianity in this world? It must be so, if Christians make a due improvement of their knowledge and means. But if we yield this point, are there not still motives enough for all, and more than all the exertions which missionaries have ever yet made? and inducements sufficient to undergo all the deprivations and sufferings which have fallen to their lot? What will not human nature sometimes endure in quest of knowledge, or gold, or celebrity? To what acts of daring and suffering will benevolence sometimes prompt a Christian, that he may render a temporary good to a solitary individual. And is it not enough that by extending Christianity we may communicate happiness in this world, which may not only be shared by numbers of the present age, but be handed down with increase to succeeding ages? If ours be a faith which inspires no zeal to extend itself, let us abandon it as destitute of an essential apostolic seal; but if the fault be in us, and not in our system, let us humble ourselves and honour those, by imitating their example, who, with a system less pure, have discovered a zeal more ardent, and perhaps it ought to be added, in some respects more useful to mankind.

4. In the efforts which missionary associations are now making, the probable means of extending the Christian religion are included.

It is manifest from various passages of the New Testament, that the Christian religion is to be extended by means of the preached and written word, and the administration of the Christian ordinances, with God's blessing upon these means; and where the means are faithfully and understandingly used, there is not the least reason to apprehend the blessing will be withheld. So far as preaching is concerned, this position is clearly implied in the text by which our discourse was introduced; and other passages too numerous to be quoted, and, it is hoped, within the recollection of the hearers, incontestibly prove the assertion. Indeed we can conceive of no other means, unless miracles, tongues, prophecy and other extraordinary gifts of the Spirit should be

revived. Now the efforts, which various missionary associations are making, do include these means, to wit, preaching, the distribution of the holy scriptures in various languages, the administration of the Christian ordinances, together with the communication of such degrees of learning, especially to the rising generation, as are requisite to insure, in some measure, the success of the other means.

It may be objected, that the success of such efforts, in modern times, has been as yet limited, partial and uncertain. This is incident to the nature of the undertaking. It is to be expected, that it may require ages to complete the work; but it may not be the less certain that a sure beginning has been made, and that perseverance will surely complete it. It may be objected, that many are engaged in it from inadequate or base motives,—many who are deceivers, or deceived. This is also incident to all great undertakings requiring the concurrence of many individuals. It may be objected, that both the labourers and the field are often ill chosen. This is a reason for changing the labourers and the field, but not for abandoning the work. It may be objected, as a consequence of the ill choice of labourers, that Christianity is often communicated, or attempted to be communicated, in a corrupted or imperfect form. But even in such a form, Christianity may be better than any other religion; and at most, this objection leads no further than to a more judicious choice of labourers. It would seem that the argument, from all these considerations, is conclusive in favour of missionary exertions in general, that honour is due to those by whom they are commenced, and that those who make them from right motives, will in no wise lose their reward, even when they are apparently unsuccessful.

It is high time, then, for every one to awake out of sleep, and lend assistance, through some particular channel, to that which is so good in its general tendency. The cause of missions is the cause of God. He has owned and blessed the work; and, it is verily believed, will own and bless it. Let us add to the number of labourers and the amount of means; and, whenever we attempt to mend the direction, be careful not to check the spirit, in which this great work is carried on,—and much more, not to impeach the motives of the great body of Christians engaged in it. Let us be more ready to take shame to ourselves that we have done and attempted no more, than to withhold due honour from any who may have done or attempted much, though it may not have been in the manner which seems preferable to us.

II. The design of the Evangelical Missionary Society was, and still is—to aid the newly and thinly settled parts of our own

country, in procuring the stated ministration of the word and ordinances of the gospel, commencing in those places of this description which are nearest home, and which may solicit our aid, and extending our labours to more distant fields, as we should be encouraged by past success, and an increase of means—to continue our efforts in those places, in which they are once commenced with acceptance and success, till a regular society be established, which should support the gospel without our aid;—to unite, wherever it is necessary and practicable, in our labourers, the office of instructors of youth with that of preachers of the gospel, so that the seed sown in one generation may, with the blessing of God, bear increased fruit in the next;—and to distribute in our fields of labour such approved religious books and tracts as might be presented to us by pious individuals, or otherwise conveniently obtained.

These are the objects which we have pursued, and which we purpose still to pursue. For accounts of the success, which has attended the efforts of the society, I must refer you principally to the annual reports which have been published. We have effected nothing to boast of, but somewhat to be thankful for to God and the great head of the church. It is a subject of particular satisfaction and consolation, and calls loudly upon us for gratitude to Him who alone can give the increase, that all those who have gone out from us as missionaries, and have afterwards become settled ministers of the gospel in the places whither they were sent, are alive at this day, dwelling contentedly among their own people, continuing assiduous and faithful in their labours, and approving themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. The number of these is perhaps as great as could be expected in so short a period of time, and with the very limited means which have been at the disposal of the society. It is also a satisfaction to reflect that in almost every instance, if not in every instance, (it is believed in every instance,) in which our aid has been once requested and granted, it has been earnestly requested again and again, with expressions of thankfulness for past assistance. It is also a satisfaction to us, though mingled with many painful reflections, that assistance is frequently and earnestly asked of us, which our means do not permit us to render.

If then the objects of our pursuit be worthy, such is our situation, that we might almost consider ourselves excusable, if we were importunate in asking for *more* aid. But we have no right to be judges in our own cause. We only ask permission to state it with plainness and earnestness, and to exhort you to consider it, since, as we suppose, you have publicly convened for that

purpose this day. It is admitted, our designs have not the splendour and magnitude which invest those embraced by several other missionary associations; it is admitted, that if both we and they should fully accomplish our objects, *they* will have performed by far the greatest good; it is admitted, that the present situation of those, who are in the most destitute, insulated, and ignorant parts of these states, is far preferable to the condition of those who are groping in the dark night of heathenism. But, on the other hand, in our case, the needs of those we would aid are manifest, the field of labour is near, success is more certain, the expense of cultivation is comparatively little, and joint aid is continually springing up from the bosom of the field itself. It has always been a part of the economy of the Evangelical Missionary Society to aid those who would be encouraged, by the help which we should afford, to do something to help themselves. The good effects of our exertions have been unquestionably owing in some degree to this part of our plan.

The Society also disclaims a sectarian character; and appeals to the characters of its missionaries, and especially to those who have become settled ministers under its patronage, as longest and best known, for proof, that it may disclaim this character. It carefully aims not to interfere with the efforts of other similar associations; and instructs its missionaries not to invade the province of ordained pastors of any denomination. Its object is to build up, and not to pluck down; and to build on its own, and not on another's foundation. It understands by waste places, those places in which the friends of religion are yet too few or too poor to maintain the regular institutions of the gospel; and those places in which sects have been so much multiplied, or irreligion has become so prevalent, that no protestant denomination can regularly maintain the institutions of the gospel any longer without assistance. To places of these descriptions the Society extends its aid, as far as its means will admit, at the request of those among the inhabitants, who appear to be friendly to virtue and order, religion and religious institutions.

Such, it is believed, are the objects of this Society, and the manner in which they have been and will be pursued; and its members think they have cause to rejoice in having done some good. They wish to do more. They ask for a share in the public contributions to such objects as they are pursuing. They wish to be content with such a share as may be bestowed, and are humble, that they are not more deserving of a share, proportioned to the moral value of the objects which they are pursuing with conscious integrity, and the happiness, which the ac-

complishment of those objects would undoubtedly confer upon our beloved country. They are willing to leave their claims with these explanations, to the generosity and consciences of their fellow Christians, with this additional inquiry only. Does it not become all who suppose they embrace the Christian faith, to consider whose disciples and followers they professedly are? If their Master, who was rich and exalted, humbled himself, and made himself poor, took upon himself the form of a servant, and then had not where to lay his head, submitted to a life of toil and a death of torture and ignominy, to save and bless mankind—can they, who live in comfort, and perhaps affluence and ease, look upon themselves as really the disciples and followers of such a master, and yet refuse an inconsiderable share of their substance, when there is so great a prospect of advancing their master's cause, as is placed before them at the present time? Let this inquiry be deliberately and faithfully put; and all the friends and promoters of missionary exertions may safely rest their claims upon the decision which unbiassed conscience shall make.

REASONABLENESS OF GLORYING IN THE GOSPEL.

If we judge of heaven by the common opinions of men, what can seem less glorious than the gospel? It promises neither wealth, nor power, nor any of the objects which excite ambition. The only empire it claims is the government of the heart. Forgiveness and affection are its characteristics; patience and humility its favourite virtues.—The country, in which it was first promulgated, had long ceased to be named among the independent nations of the earth; and its founder was the offspring of a fugitive Jew, doomed to an infancy of exile, a life of suffering, and the death of a traitor and a rebel.—The philosophers of the age, on which it dawned, did not welcome its appearance; and the imperial authority, which was then extended over the world, was exerted only to repress it.

The gospel cannot seem otherwise than mean and inglorious to those, who bound their hopes by the present life, and make personal, temporary advancement the object of exertion. Pride has also encouraged ingenious men to resist its authority, esteeming it more honourable to doubt respecting religion and the destiny of man, than to submit the understanding to the instructions of God; while others, not careful to discriminate truth from error, the original doctrines from later additions, have rejected

Christianity, where they intended to reject nothing but superstition, and have blushed for the gospel, when they need not have blushed but for their fellow-men.

And yet Christianity claims respect both for its origin and its character. It is a religion, which was established by the Son of God, and illustrated in its early history by unexampled displays of power, by consummate wisdom, by perfect purity. As a revelation it is addressed to the understanding of man. While it supports the scrutiny of reason, it engages and occupies the affections; and it exercises a happy influence on the moral condition by improving and cherishing the higher qualities of the mind.

Let us attend to these truths, that we may persuade ourselves to respect, no less than to love our religion, and learn to bear the cross not only willingly but proudly.

I. We glory in the Gospel for its Author.—Other systems of religion either cannot be traced to their origin, or have been but the inventions of lawgivers and usurping warriors, who, hoping to enlist on their side the religious fanaticism of the people, established such forms of worship as suited their climate, their age, and the prejudices of those whom they would govern or subdue. Most of the ancient sacred institutions grew out of the popular superstitions, formed from the series of accumulated traditions; and resting on no foundations but usage and credulity.

The gospel knows its author. It delivers its precepts and its promises in the name of Jesus of Nazareth; and Jesus of Nazareth is a guide, of whom we need not be ashamed.

He claims a descent from God. A chorus of celestial beings welcomed the morning of his nativity; the kings of the east were excited to pay him homage, and a star shot from its orbit to guide them to his cradle. A messenger, sent from Heaven, rescued him from the bloody design of his country's tyrant, and guided him to the same land where Moses had been taught to liberate his people. When he appeared among men as their friend and their instructor, nature obeyed his voice, though the hearts of men remained stubborn. The waves subsided and the winds grew still at his rebuke; the waters hardened beneath his steps as he trod them; the sick ceased to languish, and evil spirits to torment at his command; death drew back, and corruption forgot its office at his bidding; earth trembled and the sun hid its face, as he bowed his head to die; angels descended from heaven to witness and announce his resurrection.

The wisdom, which directed the power and inspired the in-

structions of Jesus, was superior to all that antiquity had produced. For who will compare the clearness of his doctrines with the bewildering obscurity of the ancient philosophers? or the spotless purity of his injunctions with that compromise between virtue and sensuality, which characterizes the Grecian schools? The heathen sages discoursed of virtue; but it was at the nocturnal banquet, amidst the luxuries of the table and the excitement of wine: Jesus drew the multitude into the wilderness, and prepared them for reflection by fasting and prayer. The former are said to have drawn wisdom from the clouds, and introduced her to the streets and the forum: Jesus called her from the throne of God, and planted her within the bosoms of men. And whence could Jesus have derived his wisdom? The age, in which he lived, was a corrupt one; Palestine could offer no examples of patriotism, devotion, or disinterested virtue: and the holy land had long since ceased to be fertile in sacred instructions. The country was inhabited by a degraded race, and Roman licentiousness increased the irreligion and degeneracy of the city. Could he go to the temple for improvement?—the money changers had their stalls, where the people were wont to kneel:—Or to the Jewish Doctors?—at twelve years old he was wiser than them all:—Or to the high priest and his associates?—In their servile submission to Cæsar they had broken their allegiance to God:—Or to the learned sects of the nation? One of them denied the immortality of man, and another was zealous for nothing but the observance of the ritual. And we must not think that the genius of ancient Poetry still breathed its influence on the land of Moses, and of David; or that the spirit of prophecy yet walked unseen on the mountains of Judea. The Jewish nation was thoroughly corrupt; and had been so for ages. They retained nothing of the bravery, the inspiration, the piety of their ancestors. All these they had lost, and with them they had lost the favour of God. The harp of David had long since been broken: the very echoes of the Lord's song had died away: the fire of prophecy had become extinguished on the altar; and for more than a century the Urim and Thummim had not glistened in their light and perfection. Whence then could Jesus have drawn his wisdom? Whence but from the undefiled springs of his own pure heart, and the blessed inspiration of God?

We have spoken thus far of the miracles which distinguished the life of Jesus, and of that heavenly wisdom which was poured out upon him without measure. We have seen him excelling all mankind in power and in knowledge. To complete the description of his perfect character, we have only to add his un-

blemished *moral purity*, his love for man, for truth, and for God. Through the whole course of his life Jesus Christ was actuated by none but the highest and purest motives, by the warmest patriotism and the most generous affection for the human race. He would have gathered his whole nation under the wing of his protection: he sent out instructors to convert mankind, and suffered his side to be pierced, that they might feed their hopes on his blood. Devotion was his ruling principle, the habit of his soul; the love of God was his strongest passion; and the welfare of men the object which he pursued with inflexible firmness. Follow him through the whole course of his ministry; weigh every word; scrutinize every action; and you will learn that the mind of Jesus was never stained by passions, never bent by unjust desires, never unmindful of the calls of duty; that he was the same faultless character in the wilderness and in the cities, in temptation and in triumph, in the midst of crowds or when forsaken by men and by his Father; and the more you contemplate his character, the more will you admire his excellence, love him for the warning voice of friendship, the admonitions, the lessons of guiding wisdom, and glory in him as your Teacher, your Redeemer and your Lord.

Is not the gospel then glorious for its author?

II. The Gospel is no less glorious for its intrinsic excellence. It is deficient in none of the characteristics, which give loveliness or honour to sacred institutions.

Christianity is a revealed religion, a rational religion, an affectionate religion, a moral religion.

Christianity is a revelation. Religion did not commence its existence with the birth of Christ: The hand of Providence upheld Creation, the practice of virtue was the duty of moral beings, holiness had a claim to happiness, the spirits of men were immortal before, no less than since, the Christian doctrine was promulgated. Life and immortality were not ordained, but only brought to light by the gospel. The nature of our relation to God is not changed, but only explained to us; and those principles have been authoritatively promulgated, which, whether concealed or unfolded, exist in eternal unchanging verity. There is but one religion for all worlds and all ages, and Christianity consists in the revelation of that religion to man. Its principles are professed not only on earth, but in all worlds where truth has dawned. We speak in the spirit of Christianity, and with the authority of scripture; for if the devils believe and tremble, then the angels believe and obey; we have a community of service with the hosts of heaven: and the faith which warms the Christian's heart, kindles the devotion of seraphs. The unity of

the spirit pervades earth and heaven; and one sacred bond unites the farthest parts of the moral universe.

But while the first principles of our faith are revealed and taught with authority, the understanding is not enslaved, nor the right of judging and examining controlled. Christianity is a rational religion. Reason hails its appearance, as the presence of her kindest ally and firmest supporter. Who does not know how difficult it is to discuss the nature of things which are invisible and divine; how presumptuous to decide from argument alone, on the character of futurity and the world beyond the grave? On these sublime objects of enquiry, the Christian has received instruction, which elevates his moral nature, which does not contradict but confirms the doubtful conclusions of his understanding. The spiritual and parental character of God, the immortality of man, the force of moral obligations, the connection between virtue and happiness, repentance, the resurrection, heaven, hell, judgment and eternity—these are the solemn and momentous thoughts, which the gospel presents as the fit subjects of careful reflection. Christianity is therefore a rational religion, because it invites examination, elevates the understanding, and presents to it the noblest truths, on which the powers of reason can be exercised.

But it is false and fatal to esteem Christianity a religion of reason alone. The heart is the true sanctuary of the gospel. The new covenant is an affectionate one; and its first commandment does but enjoin the love of God: that sacred, fervent and habitual love, which may purify every exercise of the affections, lend beauty and innocence to every resolution and desire, and imbue the whole soul with gentleness, humility and devotion.

And thus our religion presents itself as a moral one, destined to have a practical influence on the hearts and lives of men, appointed to make them good, that they may be made happy. Christianity is no scheme which opens the courts of heaven to those who are too indolent or too stubborn to become virtuous; and the merits of another can never be pleaded as an excuse for our own degeneracy. Vice is essentially offensive to God, and is therefore essentially miserable, and if we live and die in sin, we cannot hope for salvation. Shall we plead the covenant? It is in vain, for we have not fulfilled its conditions. Shall we gather hope from the mild and forgiving spirit of the gospel? The penitent are spared, but Christianity is no shield to be interposed between wickedness and its merited consequences. Or shall we call on Jesus to intercede for us and to save us? Jesus himself has no power to redeem us, if we persist in being vicious; his tears could not rescue Jerusalem from

destruction, and they will not preserve the reprobate from misery. If we would be saved by the gospel, we must obey its laws, become sober in our lives, and moral in our habits. Good works are eloquent intercessors at the throne of justice, and will be found the best advocates in the day of trial. It is this last feature, which especially distinguishes the gospel. Pagan deities are invoked as the authors of injustice and the patrons of crime: Christianity vindicates the importance of good morals; and makes virtue the only power, which can carry a soul triumphantly through the world, which can open the gates of paradise, and confer the honours of a spotless and happy immortality.

While we lament, therefore, the idolatry of the Pagans, and leave the infidel to his comfortless scepticism, we attach ourselves to the gospel. We rally under its banners without fear: we meet its adversaries boldly, or rather with mingled indignation and pity, for we stand on a higher moral foundation, we move in a sublimer sphere than they. We believe, and they deny; their hearts are cold, and ours are warm with devotion; they go down to the dust like brutes; we ascend upwards like angels: their souls are chained to earth; ours have their walks in heaven.

Who then will not glory in the gospel? Tell the infidel, that while he professes principles, which paralyze the faculties of the mind, repress the desire of improvement, and strike at the root of public prosperity and domestic happiness, we maintain a faith, which connects our natures with God, and our hopes with another world, while it prompts us to active virtue in this.—The tenets of infidelity are not only not divine—they deny the existence of any thing divine. They not only have no eloquent defenders, no resolute martyrs—by destroying the moral affections they dry up the springs of moral eloquence, and no cause seems worthy of being defended at the sacrifice of life. We profess a religion, which has God for its author, and the Son of God for its herald; a religion which we embrace with our hearts, and for which we are ready to shed our blood; a religion confirmed by prophecies and supported by miracles; and professed by the wisest and purest of all ages, by men the most enlightened, the most rational and the most holy; a religion which has cherished the piety and subdued the passions of millions, bridled the insolence of despotic power, protected the humble against the tyranny of the wealthy, and appeared as the guardian of social order, the tutelary genius of domestic life; a religion which has triumphed over ancient superstition, has dethroned the heathen deities, and established spiritual worship, with a purity of service; a religion which has been reverenced by its enemies

themselves; has been confirmed by the testimony of innumerable witnesses, cemented by the blood of martyrs, preserved and extended by the visible Providence of God; a religion against which the gates of hell and of earth never have prevailed and never will prevail: and if such be Christianity, who will blush to be a Christian? Who is so timid, that he will fear to profess it? Who is so heartless, that he will not boast of the cross? Who is so ungrateful, that he will not glory in the gospel?

G. B.

HUMAN ABILITY AND DIVINE GRACE.

, What is to be inferred concerning the moral capacities of men, and the nature of spiritual influences, from that declaration of our Lord; 'No man can come to me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him?'

These words have been often employed to prove, that men are in a peculiar sense dependent with respect to their spiritual interests and duties. All admit, that it is our duty to come to Christ: that is, to believe on him, or to become his true disciples. But many suppose, that there is a special and insuperable obstacle in the way; and that this consists not in the want of either natural or intellectual power, but in a depravity of heart, or stubbornness of will, which we cannot overcome, which our utmost efforts cannot remove. In other words, they believe that mankind have by nature such a disposition, that they cannot come to Christ, or believe his gospel, until they are visited with an extraordinary or supernatural influence. This influence, they further suppose, is given, not in consequence of their efforts to obtain it, but according to an eternal decree, which has no respect to the character of men. The whole of this system may be exhibited in the following series of questions and answers. 'Is it the duty of men to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?' It is. 'Can they in their natural state exercise this faith?' They cannot. 'In what does this inability consist?' In opposition or depravity of heart. 'Can they remove this disposition, or do any thing, which shall incline God to remove it for them?' They cannot; because all their actions, and all their attention to outward duties, while they have in them this disposition, is sin. Even their prayers are an abomination. 'How then can they become exempt from this depravity of nature, and exercise faith in Christ?' By the special influences of God's Holy Spirit. 'Will this influence be granted to those who seek it?' It will

be granted only to the prayer of faith. 'Can we pray in this manner unless we first have this special influence?' We cannot. The question then returns, 'How can we obtain that supernatural grace, which alone can remove our depravity, and bring us to Christ?' God will grant it to his elect, and the rest of mankind must remain inevitably under condemnation. Though they are commanded to come to Christ, yet this is as much above their power, as it would be to create a world; because they cannot come without a will, and this will is the gift of God. To make them willing is as much the act of God, and as great an exhibition of divine power, as to raise the dead. 'What then can we do to promote our salvation?' Nothing. Our strength and our wisdom are in God. 'But are we commanded to do nothing?' On the contrary, we are commanded to do our whole duty, though we are unable of ourselves to do any part of it. At the same time, God is just in laying these commands upon us, because we lost our power by Adam's apostasy, and our inability is of a moral nature, belonging to the will, or heart, and not to the understanding. The most learned philosophers are as unable to come to Christ as the feeblest child. All men by nature are equally destitute of that, without which they cannot come to Christ. It is the work of God to give them that special qualification, the gift of his special grace; and their own efforts to obtain it, are altogether unavailing, because altogether sinful. Yet are they justly condemned, for being destitute of it.

We believe, that the preceding questions and answers exhibit a clear and just view of the prevailing system respecting the dependence of man, and the special grace of God. It is impossible not to perceive the apparent inconsistencies, which are involved in this system. In all common cases, we feel the fullest assurance that men cannot justly be blamed for that, which is given them by nature; that, which is their original constitution; that, which depended wholly on the will of another, and respecting which they exercised no choice. But here, if the sentiments or doctrine involved in these answers be correct, there is a very important exception to this principle, and we are required to bring our feelings to acquiesce in that, at which, in all other similar cases, they strongly revolt; and our reason, which is a good guide in other respects, must here be denounced as depraved, because it protests against the principles of an established creed. If the nature of men be such, that they must have a supernatural influence in order to be prepared for heaven, the blame surely must fall on him, who gave them that nature, and not on men, who necessarily must be what they are created. If that supernatural influence be not within their reach, or attain-

able on conditions, which they are able to perform, they cannot justly be blamed for being destitute of it: for no man can be blamed for not having that, which it is not in his power to obtain. If any, by the use of appointed means, cannot subdue their propensity to sin, and bring themselves to the exercise of repentance and faith, with that common or general aid, which God grants them, then, by the simplest reasoning, it is unjust to blame them, for continuing to sin, or to command them to come to Christ.

But it is urged, that the language of scripture plainly supports this system, inconsistent as it may seem with the dictates of reason, and backward as our hearts may be to admit its truth. It may be useful to examine the foundations of this plea, and to enquire, first, in what sense men are incapable of coming to Christ, and, secondly, in what manner the Father draws them.

In what sense, we may first enquire, are men incapable of coming to Christ? It should be replied, they are incapable, in the same sense, in which they are incapable of performing the most common actions of life. We are incapable of walking without divine aid, support, and guidance. We cannot, independent of God, procure the common comforts of life. We are indebted to him for power to make progress in knowledge, to exercise the kind and benevolent affections, and to perform beneficent and charitable deeds. In a similar manner are we dependent on him for capacity to come to Christ, or to exercise repentance and faith. But when he commands us to walk, he gives us the power of walking. Were we without the power, we should not be under the obligation to walk. A service of this kind is never required of an infant, or of one, whose strength is destroyed by sickness. Whenever God requires us to procure for ourselves, or our families, the comforts of life, he gives us the power and the means of so doing. If any thing in our constitution, or in the course of his Providence, hinders us, we are of course free from the obligation. If he commands us to acquire knowledge, to be charitable and useful, he gives us all the capacities, which are requisite to the fulfilment of these duties. If at any period, or in any condition in life, our power to perform these services ceases, the obligation to do them ceases also. In all these cases, we see, that it would be utterly unjust, to recommend men to do what they are unable to do. In like manner, whenever God requires us to come to Christ, he gives us the means and the power of coming. If he requires us to have certain dispositions and affections, such as love to God and men, and faith in Jesus Christ, he gives us the means and the power of forming within ourselves these dispositions, and of cherishing these affections. If he calls

upon us to repent and to be converted, to make to ourselves a new heart and a new spirit, to cleanse our hands and to purify our hearts, to become new creatures, then he gives us the power of effecting this change in our characters. It would be as unjust, as absurd, as cruel, to require these things of men, without giving them the requisite means and capacities, as to require any other service, which they are incapable of performing. If they are unable to change their hearts, and to come to Christ, they might, with the same propriety, be commanded to fly, or to create a world, as to perform these duties. The scriptures never intimate that men are in a peculiar sense dependent, or incapable with respect to the duties of religion, and the concerns of their salvation. Their uniform and explicit instruction is, that we are wholly and equally dependent upon God for every thing, for the good things of this life, as well as for virtue and future happiness. We may indeed say, with the Psalmist of old, 'Open mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.' And we may also pray, as our Saviour has taught us, 'Give us this day our daily bread.' But the former prayer, and others resembling it, no more denote a natural blindness or incapacity for spiritual things, than the latter denotes that we are naturally incapable of tilling the ground, or pursuing those common employments, by which we obtain a subsistence. It has often been thought, that the prayer for spiritual blessings, such as holiness, love, submission, and a new heart, and the promises God has made to bestow these favours on man, imply a peculiar inability or dependence, and the necessity of a special influence or extraordinary grace. With as much propriety might it be pretended, that the prayers for temporal blessings, and the promises God has made to bestow them, imply a peculiar inability, and the need of a special assistance. The truth is, that the inference is alike unwarrantable in both cases. Our dependence with regard to temporal blessings is not such as to render us incapable of performing our whole duty with respect to them; and in like manner our dependence on the grace of God, with regard to the exercise of repentance and faith, does not render us incapable of discharging these duties. It is indeed true, that no man can come to Christ except the Father draw him; and it is equally true, that no man can procure the necessaries and comforts of life, unless God grant him aid, strength, and success. But, as he never commands them to obtain these necessaries and comforts, without giving them the needed strength, aid, and success, so he never commands them to come to Christ, without granting them the needed drawing, or influence. In other words, he never commands them to perform any duty, without giving them adequate ability, or means to perform it.

We are hence conducted to the second enquiry, In what manner does the Father draw men? He draws them in a manner suited to their nature, as rational and free agents. His drawing is not compulsion; it is not irresistible impulse; it is not mechanical force; it does not constrain them to come. It places them in a situation to come. He draws them by the use of various means; by instructions, admonitions, invitations, promises, threatenings, and events of his providence. It may also be admitted, that he draws them by a positive or direct influence on their mind, exerted in a way, consistent with their free agency, and given in connexion with their own efforts, and in answer to their prayers. 'If ye, being evil,' said our Lord, 'know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your Father, who is in heaven, give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' Those, who live in a state of pagan darkness, are not drawn to Christ; and therefore cannot come. Nor are they required to come. Persons in a state of infancy are not drawn to Christ, and therefore cannot come; nor are they commanded to come. In the former case, there is a want of means; in the latter, a want of capacity. Coming to Christ implies the exercise of the understanding, as well as of the will and affections; and the drawing or influence of the Father is through the medium of the rational and moral powers. He draws them by imparting to them, in his word, instructions respecting the character, the offices, and the works of Christ, and respecting their own duties, obligations, and interests. In these instructions are included the various motives of the gospel. He admonishes them of the danger and ruin, which attend a rejection of Christ. He shows them the happy consequences of coming to him; that it is attended with peace here, and followed by everlasting life hereafter. In this way he addresses their hope and fear, their love of happiness, and their dread of misery, those powerful principles of action. But all this influence may be resisted; and on this account Christians are exhorted not to receive the grace of God in vain. There are also many calls of providence; events, which are fitted to awaken our gratitude and love, to inspire us with a religious awe, and to awaken in us a salutary fear. But this influence, as well as the other, may be resisted; it is not necessarily effectual. Hence God said, 'I have called, but ye refused: I have stretched out my hand, but no man regarded.' The same remark is applicable to the direct influence of the spirit on the heart. For it is said, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man;' and, 'Ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: As did your fathers, so do ye.' When, therefore, we see men, who do not come to Christ, we are not to infer, that

the Father does not draw them, but merely that they resist his drawing. We are not to infer that this drawing, or influence is limited to a few, or to a select number, 'for it is written in the Prophets, that they all shall be taught of God.' If they receive and obey these instructions and hear and learn of the Father, they will come to Christ. If they do not thus hear and learn, let them charge their neglect, not to any deficiency in the instruction, or in the grace given by God, but solely to the sinful indifference or opposition of their own hearts. The supposed distinction between common grace and special finds no support in the scriptures, but originates in human authority and error. If common grace or influence be adequate to the salvation of men, special grace is needless. If common grace be not adequate to this end, it is no longer grace, it is no favour; it leaves men in a worse state than they would be without it; for it aggravates their guilt without rendering their salvation either probable or possible. W. B.

THOUGHTS ON CONTROVERSY.

Under the general title assumed above, it is proposed to offer some reflections on the duties and dangers which belong to a state of controversy. They may be considered as a sequel to the remarks on this general subject in the first number of the current year.

I look upon controversy, as one of the great dispensations of God. It results from the very constitution of our minds, and must have been expected to result. The sensitiveness, therefore, which shrinks from a fair and full consideration of the obligations and exposures of this state of things, is misplaced.

As little is *indifference* to be countenanced in such a case. Indeed the profession of it, is very much to be suspected. For every bad passion, as well as every good affection, is likely to be interested. Every bad passion, it is too obvious; and as to the good—the spectacle of schism and separation in the church, must be, to every Christian mind, I am sure, a very serious one, and if it were not for the uses they may serve, would be very sorrowful. In connection with this subject one can hardly fail to be very much impressed with many of the early sayings and actions of our Saviour. When we read some of the discourses of our Lord, and mark the affection and tenderness they breathe; when we hear him praying for his followers of every succeeding age, that they all might be one; that his church might be one

fold having one shepherd; when we perceive how,—immaculate as he was,—how he bore with his mistaken and worldly followers, and thus set them an example of mutual forbearance; above all, when we witness the gentleness and condescension with which he washed the very feet of these erring and faulty disciples, and that too for the express purpose of promoting mutual charity and kindness, we may well think that the state of his divided and afflicted church calls for something besides our indifference; calls, indeed, for our deepest and most solemn consideration.

Besides; this consideration, I trust, may be made to appear of great use. In fact, it is one part, and not the least important and difficult part of our appointed duties, to stand approved in these trials. It is entitled, therefore, to a share in our religious discussions. It is very striking to observe, that while men are disputing with vehemence about doctrines, there is an interior *moral* process of far greater consequence, which nevertheless is generally overlooked, is seldom discussed, is scarcely thought of as a matter of duty and conscience, and moral responsibility. Indeed, this subject will be found in many ways, I think, to be very practical. Of this, however, it shall be left to my readers to judge, in the progress of the remarks I have now to offer. I must premise that they will be considerably miscellaneous. The compass of the subject will be my apology; and, I might add, its irksomeness, for it is too unwelcome to invite frequent discussion, and therefore, inclines us to make the most of a given opportunity.

1. My first remark shall be to this effect: Let us not make *too much* of being in a state of controversy. Let us not be too much agitated nor distressed by it; first, because it is what falls out in the natural course of things, and secondly, because it may be, and *is* productive of many advantages.

First, *it is a matter of course*, that there should be controversies. 'There must be heresies among you' says an apostle. He does not mean by heresies, in this place, errors, but what the word originally and usually signifies, schisms, divisions. I desire any one to read this 11th Chap. of the 1st Cor. that he may be perfectly satisfied. The apostle is not speaking of doctrines, at all, but of a difference of opinion, or of practice about forms; of a dissension in the celebration of the Lord's supper. And what he says, is 'that there must be dissensions;' differences of opinion. If any one does not see that this *must* result from the very imperfection of the human mind, let him look at the state of facts. When has there not been controversy? It broke forth even in the apostolic times. The early fathers, too, had their controversies. And when the hierarchy waxed strong, and

swayed a sceptre over every thing else, it could not control the mind, and there were controversies still. One considerable portion of the history of the Papacy is a history of councils, convened to settle controversies. And how it has been among Protestants, it is needless to say. They originally took their name from their *protesting* against the Catholics, and they have acquired a hundred-fold stronger title to it, by having been, ever since, protesting against one another. Such have been the results of human infirmity, and such, it is probable, they ever will be. The millenial period when men could learn to *love* one another,—when they thus *feel* alike, may be looked for, but a millenium when men will *think* alike can scarcely be.

Let us not think it strange then, concerning the fiery trial which tries us, as if some strange thing had happened to us. It is the most common and natural of all things. It has happened to all Christians that *have* been, and it probably will happen to all that are yet to have their lot in this state of ignorance and imperfection. Let us not, then, make an ado about schisms. Let us not conjure up gratuitous and fictitious difficulties and troubles, in the paths of religion. Let us not acquire a habit of fearing, or complaining, or lamenting about the evils of our condition.—It is of great importance that we should take just views of this subject. Controversy, when it is angry dissension;—schism, when it is not of the mind, only, but of the heart, cannot be too much deprecated. We can scarcely be too sensitive about it. We can scarcely make too much of it. But mere difference of opinion is quite another thing. It belongs to our condition; I had almost said, it is a part of our nature. We hear men lament controversy, as if it were a most unnatural and unprecedented phenomenon; as if a difference of opinion were a deplorable thing; as if it were a blot on the Christian name; as if it destroyed the unity of God's church, which it does not, or need not, at all, for *that* is a unity in love and good works; the only union that erring men are capable of, and all they need desire. And not only so, but they actually love one another more, or at least in a more elevated manner, for their differences. When they can lay aside their prejudice, their pride, their little peculiarities of opinion, for the greater and holier claims of mutual worth, they both exalt and more highly *enjoy* the pleasures of mutual esteem and friendship.

Controversy does in this and other ways nurture some of the noblest and purest virtues, and it also promotes the most useful investigations. This in general is another of the reasons assigned for not indulging too great a sensitiveness about the evils of the present state of things. There is not only necessity, but

use, to plead for it. Contending opinions may answer a good purpose, as well as the contending elements. They purify the moral atmosphere. They clear up the field of vision. They dissipate the shadows of error and superstition. And the minds of men *need* some such excitement. The worst period of the church has been that of the greatest uniformity of opinions; not the most ignorant only, but the most immoral period. And though it be true, that the moral character, the piety of some good men is sadly disfigured by their disputes, and though the passions of the bad are unhappily exasperated, yet what noble examples have we of Christian mildness too, and forbearance and affection! Some of the most illustrious friendships in the world have been those of religious opponents. And there are such instances still. We thank God that they are increasing! And in the *private* walks of Christian piety too, there are many to be found, I trust, who are guarding themselves against the great temptation; whose thoughts and words are habitually subdued to Christian gentleness and charity; who are walking in the seven times heated furnace unhurt; who shine the brighter and shall come forth purer, for the flames that are around them. God speed you, ye messengers of Christian forbearance and reconciliation! The spirit of the lowly and benevolent Jesus is upon you; and his blessing shall be upon you too. For he has said, 'blessed are the peacemakers!' and surely he will pronounce those eminently so, who make peace among his sincere but mistaken and divided followers. These, are the crown of our conflicts—these virtues, and the men who possess them. Let us not think them too dearly purchased, nor thoughtlessly murmur at the discipline of heaven that forms them.

I give all respect, nay, and sympathy, to him, who feels that religion *ought* to be the bond of kindness, and kind fellowship; who is weary of disputes, whose mind sickens at the thought of dissension, whose heart is touched with the goodness of God to *him*, and would fain be at peace with all his creatures and children, who is so happy in the privilege of being a Christian that he cannot indulge an unkind or bitter thought; who, in one word, has found in religion the rest and joy of all his affections, and desires only that he may cherish it, and carry it with him, to his grave in peace. Would to God, I was ready to say, that this might be the lot of us all! But it is not appointed to us. There must be divisions, says the apostle. And he assures us for our consolation and peace of mind, that they have an important use; that by them, those who are approved are made manifest; that the faithful and self-denying, the meek and humble will shine more brightly in the fiery trial; will give a more

splendid illustration of the power and heavenly spirit of our religion.

2. But if we would derive improvement from religious controversy, we must not be shaken by it. My second remark, therefore, is on the importance of being settled and established in our faith.

The changes and agitations of the outer elements, while they nurture the growth of every thing else, do wither and destroy all the hasty, shallow, and imperfect productions of the soil. It is so in the concern of our moral improvement. In our Christian standing we need to be firm; we need to be rooted and grounded in the faith, that we may not be blown about by every wind of doctrine. In all matters *but* those which are fundamental, it is perhaps more favourable to piety—at least to the strength, if not to the purity of it—to be settled in a wrong doctrine, than to be hesitating about a right one. This is one of the difficulties that is incident to the progress of opinion, and it is our concern to guard against it. Hesitation about the objects of belief is likely to be injurious, on two accounts. It chills the affections: and it exposes us to be unduly impressed by the confident and bold pretensions and admonitions of others—which will commonly be so much the more imposing and solemn, as the person who uses them, knows less about the matter. It is surprising, indeed, that this weapon is not, at length, worn out. When did truth ever advance one step on earth, that it was not met with expressions of horror and warning? Christianity was at first received with *horror*. The Reformation was regarded with *horror*. And every attempt to prosecute this great work has met with the same fate. We must, therefore, arm ourselves against dangers common to this, with all former times. It is a needful preparation for these days, that we should read and reflect till we are satisfied—till we are settled and grounded in the truth,—and when we are, it were as well, perhaps, if we should never open another book of controversy. But satisfied or not, we may, and should be convinced, that the reasonings of polemics are not the essential matters of religion, that they are only 'the first principles' of the doctrine of Christ, and settled or unsettled, we may safely leave them to go on to perfection,—to perfection in virtue and piety.

3. But though we may be fully established in our religious views, there is still another exposure. This I shall denominate, as the third and final topic, now to be mentioned, the danger of a *controversial way of thinking* about religion. This danger affects our views of religious men, and religious subjects. With regard to religious men, we are too prone, under the influence of this habit of mind, to think of them, not as Christians, but as

sectarians, and of ourselves, in relation to them, not as brethren, but as opponents. We thus narrow the large and liberal views we ought to entertain, and overshadow with our prejudices the virtues of our brethren.

Christians speak of one another too much in the way of comparison. You hear it said of some individual, that he is a very good man, *though* he is a Calvinist; and, again, it must be allowed of another, that he is a truly pious man, though he is an Anti-Calvinist; and it would seem as if men were half offended at these good qualities in their opponents. Some noble and benevolent action is done, and it is not only referred to the individual who has performed it, but the individual is referred to the class of Christians to which he belongs, and then it comes to be viewed more or less through the medium of religious prejudice. From the same cause, Christians fail to derive the benefit which they ought, from each others' good examples and good enterprises. There is some instance of eminent devotion, or of admirable self-denial, or some noble project of benevolence, presented to the mind.—'Ah! but these are people of another class'—is the reflection that rises—'I do not belong to them, and their measures of duty and of conduct do not at all concern me.' And when we pronounce the *name* of a sect—when we speak of an Episcopalian, a Presbyterian, a Quaker, a Methodist, we are more apt, I suspect, to think of the peculiarities of each, than of the virtues that more or less belong to them all. I say, of the virtues that belong to them all. For who, that has any knowledge of the world—who that has been among different classes of Christians, has not found among them all, men of the most undissembled and admirable worth and piety—men, whom to know, was to love—to whom your affections would cling, even in spite of their distrust, and to whom you felt that they must cling forever? And it is a fair subject of regret, that we should fail to perceive and acknowledge their worth. Besides all the other evils I have mentioned, it is, in itself, a very great misfortune, not to appreciate and admire the piety of our brethren. Since goodness is comparatively the only good thing on earth, and there is so little of it to be found, it seems lamentable, that any portion of it should be lost to us. I would not look upon other men as schismatics and heretics—I would not think it my sad duty to condemn and pity them continually, for a thousand times the comfort of a fancied monopoly of all the wisdom and goodness on earth.

Thus much with regard to our views of opponents; but the controversial way of thinking of our associates in opinion, is scarcely better. A great and good cause ought never to be

thought of, as depending at all on the virtues or faults of any man. And especially is it a dishonour to exalted worth, to eminent devotion, to make them a matter of sectarian boasting. The good man's character is the gift of heaven, and it is the property of the world. Let there be no selfish monopoly here. Let no man say, 'this belongs to us.' Let it be diffused abroad to enrich and bless the world. Above all, let not that which should quicken and humble us, unworthily administer to our pride and security.

It has been said, also, that our views of religious *subjects*, as well as religious men, are injured by the controversial way of thinking. And our views of religion itself are injured, in the first place, because its most noble and elevating themes are *not* matters of controversy, and the controversial way of thinking will, of course, lead us to topics which are inferior. The greatest and most sublime subjects of religion are *not* matters of dispute among Christians. *Without* controversy, there is a God—there is a soul, that shall exist forever—there is a glorious reward, or a fearful penalty for it. *Without* controversy, the gospel is an infinite blessing, and the Saviour, who taught it and sealed it with his blood, is worthy of our most tender and profound admiration and love. *Without* controversy, the essential and eternal worth and welfare of every soul, is to be found in the knowledge and love of God. Now what to us are all disputes about the *mode* of God's existence, if there *is* a God in whom we may confide and rejoice?—or about the precise metaphysical nature of our Lord, if we *have* a Saviour, to whom we may come,—weary and heavy laden as we are, and find rest? I do believe, that the mind may become dull and dwarfish in religion, by thinking more of what is doubtful and disputed, and less of what is clear, and high, and ennobling. And on the whole, such thinking is as unworthy of the subject, as it is injurious to the mind. There must be controversies, but they come from the infirmities of men. There must be walls of separation, but they are mounds of earthly mould. The tendency of religion is to escape from these restraints. It no more naturally dwells in such low abodes, than the eagle when it escapes from the cage of its confinement, and spreads its unfettered wing for heaven.

I cannot leave this general topic, without attempting something more definite and specific, in two or three concluding observations.

It has been all along implied, that the controversial way of thinking, is apt to be narrow, and unworthy of the greatness and sublimity of religion. Let us now dwell on it, for a moment, as a distinct remark. One evil of this contracting of the mind in

controversy, is an increase of its *zeal*, at the very time when it ought to be most cautious and diffident. This is often seen in the case of *new converts* to one system or another, and especially, (as is natural) to that, which professes to be an advance on the opinions of the age. It is precisely when they know the least, that they imagine themselves to be surrounded with a flood of light. They are like insects about the evening taper, that create much noise and annoyance, that are dazzled and bewildered by excess of light, and are often scorched by the flame to which they rush with apparent eagerness and complacency. Indeed, what, *in the general*,—what can be more pitiable than the zeal of a narrow mind, when it fastens upon the poor distinctions and peculiarities of a sect!—the zeal of a man, who can talk to you of nothing but *the controversy*—who is ever enquiring how *the cause* prospers—who is counting up partizans, and boasting of proselytes;—and who, on the other hand, is ever prying into the movements of the adversaries, and sees nothing but policy in all that they do—who is confident, chiefly because he is ignorant—who is eager to dispute, and who spends his breath almost as soon as his ideas.

There are men, indeed, of a different class, whose zeal is to be honoured, who are desirous to propagate their opinions, for great and noble reasons, reasons of philanthropy, and not selfishness, reasons drawn from reverence for God, and not from pride of opinion. I apprehend, indeed, that the zeal of such men is far more concerned for moral objects, than for the subtleties of theological disputation. Yet perhaps it were well for the loftiest minds, if they could view our controversies not so much through the narrow medium of actual dispute, and more in the light of other ages; of ages that are to come. It were well for him who is growing warm about some contested dogma, to look back on past times, and to see how every such matter of mere speculation, and every man who wasted his talents on it, have together sunk to oblivion, while it is the great *moral* features in the religious history of past ages, that attract the attention of mankind. Most of the disputes that have been agitated in the church are now recalled but to be ridiculed. And it may yet be thus with some of our own. Not so the moral aspects of the age. The puerile contests of the Fathers and monks and schoolmen have passed away. Not so the great controversy of the Reformation. One powerful work on the broad basis of intellectual and moral illumination, is better than twenty defences of a disputed doctrine; is intrinsically better, and is more efficacious too. For the truth is, after all, that the progress of just opinions depends more on the progress of character, of improvement, of

the general mind, than on any elaborate works of controversy. He who shall teach men to think liberally, to shake off the horror that attaches to reputed heresy, to fear God and not to fear one another, will do more to advance their ideas than if he marshalled a thousand texts against them. And it is right that it should be so. It suits with the largeness, the liberality, the grandeur of religion, that it should chiefly and permanently interest men as a moral principle, that it should be founded on the basis of moral sentiment, that it should go on with the great progress of human improvement. This the controversial way of thinking leads us to forget, but *this is true*. We fight out our little battle of zeal, vanity, and pride—we carry it high and scornfully—not Homer's heroes were more haughty and courageous; but there is no "Βραχὺς τυγχεῖ"—no resounding of arms; the world is not shaken by our exploits, nor does it long echo with the blows of the contest. Nor will any poet arise to celebrate our deeds. Nor will men remember them. The field of battle will retain no marks of the conflict. Men will not know where the plain of Ilion *was*, and they will not care.

It is a striking fact, and might be a lesson to us, that while whole libraries of ponderous controversy have sunk to oblivion or are mouldering on the shelves of the learned, a few works of moral sentiment, or fervent devotion, are living on through centuries, and seem destined to go down to the end of time.

Another observation on the controversial way of thinking is, *that it tends to magnify the differences* which exist among us. This, indeed, is a very common and just remark. And like many other good observations, we are apt enough to think that it might be turned to excellent use in the proper hands. 'We *earnestly* commend it to our brethren. We wish that our *orthodox* friends would think of it.' But is there no occasion for the remark among ourselves? Let a single illustration be offered, for we must hasten to conclude this already too protracted discussion. We sometimes hear Trinitarians charged with idolatry, and I am sorry to observe that some of them seem fond of the charge, because it justifies them in their refusal of common worship and Christian fellowship. But let us look at this matter as it is, and aside from all subtleties and words without meaning. Does not every Christian believe that he worships one God? In every DISTINCT act of devotion, does he not conceive of one God *only?* Now take the strongest supposition. Suppose that he worships Jesus Christ as this God. Shall we very seriously quarrel with him about a name? For I aver with confidence, that in this act of devotion he does not, he cannot, worship the Father as another God; he does not *think* of the Father as ano-

ther God. For us, with our opinions, to imitate him, would be criminal; but, for himself, he worships one Being, one excellence. It is not so much matter what he calls it, as what he conceives of it. Some confused notions of a Trinity, perhaps, mingle with his thoughts, but it is more likely that he does not think of a Trinity at all, till perhaps, in the close of his prayer a sort of homage is demanded for it, not so much by the feelings of his heart, as by what is customary in the conclusion of that service. And I appeal to christians of this class whether the formal ascription to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is not much less common in their private devotions, where feeling prevails over form, than in their public worship. It is certain that the direct worship of Jesus Christ as the first and leading object of adoration, is not common even among Trinitarians. And I feel a strong persuasion, which is not lightly adopted, that ninety nine out of a hundred of their sober, practical, devout thoughts, are substantially *Unitarian*. They may speculate about it; that is another thing. They may write books about it, and converse (according to their own apprehension) in such a manner as to guard their language against the charge of palpable absurdity; but they do not *pray so*. And this is the *main* concern. And moreover, with all the imbecility and obscurity that more or less attaches even to our best thoughts, it is scarcely considerate to visit on our brethren in weakness the sins of an alleged mental delinquency.

Finally, let it be observed, that the controversial way of thinking, not only exposes us to magnify the points in debate, but *to misrepresent the opinions of our opponents*. If any one among us is conscious of indignation and disgust at the misrepresentations of his faith which he meets with, he may rest assured that these sentiments are fully reciprocated by his opponents. Now this state of things is peculiarly unhappy. For it not only multiplies the topics of dispute, but it makes every topic of dispute, a subject of exasperation.

Is this state of things necessary? *Partly*, it must be feared, that it is. But is it altogether so? Can nothing be done to mitigate the evil? Would not something be effected by more discrimination and more kindness and candour?

But it is time to close this essay. Can it be too frequently or too solemnly urged upon us, that the great duty of every Christian in these times, is *to keep his own heart with all diligence?* It is of far more consequence to us to be 'approved,' *morally* approved, than to be theologically victorious, to guard our own affections, than to overthrow other men's opinions. Do we inquire *how* we shall be approved? Let us carry this ques-

tion to the judgment seat of Christ. Let us ask how we shall be approved in the righteous judgment of another world. Certainly, it will not be, by our speculative faith, nor by able defences of it. All this will pass away, and the great and only question will relate to the temper of our minds. But I am admonished to close. What it is to be *approved* in controversy, I would say in one word, by referring to the example of the great Fenelon: and will conclude with the wish, that every controversialist had it appointed to him as a task, (*penance*, I fear it would be to many) to read the Life of Fenelon, at least as often as he writes a book.

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

THE GOOD WIFE.

St. Paul to the Colossians, chap. 3. ver. 18. first adviseth women to submit themselves to their husbands, and then counselleth men to love their wives. And sure it was fitting that women should first have their lesson given them, because it is hardest to be learned, and therefore they need have more time to conne it. For the same reason we first begin with the character of a good wife.

She commandeth her husband in any equal matter, by constant obeying him. It was always observed, that what the English gained of the French in battle by valour, the French regained of the English by cunning in treaties. So if the husband should chance by his power in his passion to prejudice his wife's right, she wisely knoweth, by compounding and complying, to recover and rectify it again.

She never crosseth her husband in the spring tide of his anger, but stays till it be ebbing water; and then mildly she argues the matter, not so much to condemn him, as to acquit herself. Surely men, contrary to iron, are worst to be wrought upon when they are hot. It is an observation of seamen, that if a single meteor or fire-ball falls on their mast, it portends ill luck; but if two come together (which they count Castor and Pollux) they presage good success. But sure in a family it bodeth most bad, when two fire-balls (husband's and wife's anger) come both together.

She keeps home, if she hath not her husband's company, or leave for her patent to go abroad. For the house is the woman's centre. It is written, Psalm 104. 2. 'The sunne ariseth; man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening.' But it is said of the good woman, Prov. 31. 15. 'She riseth whiles it is yet night.' For man, in the race of his work, starts from the rising of the sunne, because his businesse is without doors, and not to be done without the light of heaven. But the woman hath her work within the house, and therefore can make the sun rise by lighting of a candle.

Her clothes are rather comely than costly, and she makes plain cloth to be velvet by her handsome wearing it. She is none of our dainty dames, who love to appear in variety of suits every day new; as if a good gown, like a stratagem in war, were to be used but once. But our good wife sets up a sail according to the keel of her husband's estate.

In her husband's absence she is wife and deputy husband, which makes her double the files of her diligence. At his return he finds all things so well, that he wonders to see himself at home, when he was abroad.

In her husband's sickness she feels more grief than she shows. Partly, that she may not dishearten him; and partly, because she is not at leisure to seem so sorrowful, that she may be the more serviceable.

Her children, though many in number, are none in noise; she steering them with a look whither she listeth. When they grow up, she teacheth them not pride, but painfulness, making their hands to clothe their backs, and them to wear the livery of their own industry. She makes not her daughters gentlewomen, before they be women, rather teaching them what they should pay to others, than receive from them.

The heaviest work of her servants she maketh light, by orderly and seasonably enjoyning it. Wherefore her service is counted preferment, and her teaching better than her wages.

Fuller's Prophane and Holy State.

OF ANGER.

FROM THE SAME AUTHOR.

Anger is one of the sinews of the soul: he that wants it hath a maimed mind, and with Jacob, sinew-shrunk in the hollow of his thigh, must needs halt.—Be not angry with any without a cause. If thou beest, thou must not onely, as the proverb saith, be appeased

without amends, (having neither costs or damage given thee,) but, as our Saviour saith, 'be in danger of the judgement.'

Take heed of doing irrevocable acts in thy passion:—as the revealing of secrets, which makes thee a bankrupt to society ever after; neither do such things, which done once are done for ever, so that no bemoaning can amend them. Sampson's hair grew again; but not his eyes. Time may restore some losses, others are never to be repaired.—Do not in an instant what an age cannot recompense.

He that keeps anger long in his bosom, giveth place to the devil. And why should we make room for him, who will crowd in too fast of himself? Heat of passion makes our souls to chappe, and the devil creeps in at the crannies.

[The following ode is from an old newspaper, where it is said to have been written by a Lady in the north of England, who for many years had languished with a hopeless consumption.]

ODE TO SICKNESS.

Not to the rosy maid, whom former hours
Beheld me fondly covet, tune I now
The melancholy lyre. No more I seek
Thy aid, Hygeia! sought so long in vain.
But 'tis to thee, O sickness! 'tis to thee
I wake the silent strings—Accept the lay.
Thou art no tyrant, waving the fierce scourge
O'er unresisting victims; but a nymph
Of mild, tho' mournful mien. Upon thy brow
Patience sits smiling; and thy heavy eye,
Tho' moist with tears, is always fixed on Heaven.
Thou wrap'st this world in gloom; but thou canst tell
Of worlds where all is sunshine; and at length,
When through the vale of sorrow thou hast led
Thy patient suff'rers, cheering them the while
With many a smile of promise, thy pale hand
Unlocks the bowers of everlasting rest,
Where death's kind angel waits to dry their tears,
And crown them with his aramanthine flowers.

Yes! I have known thee long, and I have felt
All that thou hast of sorrow. Many a tear
Has fall'n on my cold cheeks; and many a sigh
Call'd forth by thee, has swell'd my aching breast.
Yet still I bless thee, O thou chast'ning power!

For *all* I bless thee! Thou hast taught my soul
To rest upon *itself;* to look beyond
The narrow bound of time, and fix its hopes
On the sure basis of eternity.

Meanwhile, ev'n in this transitory scene,
Of what hast thou depriv'd me? Has thy hand
Clos'd up the book of knowledge; drawn a veil
O'er the fair face of nature; or destroyed
The tender pleasures of domestic life?

Ah no! tis thine to call forth in the heart
Each better feeling. Thou awakenest there
That unconfin'd *philanthropy*, which feels
For all th' unhappy: that warm *sympathy*,
Which, casting every selfish care aside,
Finds its own bliss in seeing others blest.
That *melancholy*, tender yet sublime,
Which, feeling all the nothingness of earth,
Exalts the soul to heaven; and, more than these,
That pure *devotion*, which, ev'n in the hour
Of agonizing pain, can fill the eyes
With tears of ecstacy—such tears, perhaps,
As angels love to shed.

These are thy gifts, O sickness! these to me
Thou hast vouchsafed, and taught me how to prize.
Shall my soul shrink from aught thou hast ordain'd?
Shall I e'en envy the luxurious train
Around whose path prosperity hath strewn
Her gilded toys? Ah! let them still pursue
The shining trifles; never shall they know
Such pure and holy pleasures as await
The heart refin'd by suffering. Not to them
Does fancy sing her wild romantic song:
'Tis not for them her glowing hand undraws
The sacred veil that hides th' angelic world:
They hear not, in the music of the wind,
Celestial voices, that in whispers sweet,
Call to the flowers—the young and bashful flowers!
They see not, at the shadowy hour of eve
Descending spirits who on silver wing,
Glide thro' the air, and to their harps divine
Sing in soft notes, the vesper-hymn of praise;
Or, pausing for a moment, as they turn
Their radiant eyes on this polluted scene,
Drop on their golden harps a pitying tear.

Prosperity! I court thy gifts no more;
Nor *thine*, O fair Hygeia! yet to thee
I breathe one fervent prayer; attend the strain!
If, for my faded brow, thy hand prepare

Some future wreath, let me the gift resign;
Transfer the rosy garland; bid it bloom
Around the temples of that friend beloved,
On whose maternal bosom even now
I lay my aching head; and, as I mark
The smile that plays upon her speaking face,
Forget that I have ever shed a tear!

SCRIPTURE NOT OPPOSED TO REASON.

If any thing be, upon good grounds in reason, received for a divine revelation, (as the Holy Scriptures are amongst Christians) no man ought to be regarded, who from thence pretends to maintain any doctrine contrary to the natural notions which men have of God; such as clearly contradict his holiness, or goodness, or justice, or do by plain and undeniable consequence, make God the author of sin, or the like; because the very attempt to prove any such thing out of Scripture, does strike at the divine authority of those books. For, if they be from God, it is certain they can contain no such thing. So that no man ought to suffer himself to be seduced into any such opinions, upon pretence that there are expressions in scripture, which seem to countenance them. For if they really did so, the consequence would not be the confirming of such opinions; but the weakening of the authority of the scripture itself. For just so many arguments as any man can draw from scripture for any such opinion, so many weapons he puts into the hands of atheists against the scripture itself.

I do not speak this, as if I thought there were any ground from scripture for any such doctrine; I am very certain there is not. And if there be any particular expressions, which to prejudiced men may seem to import any such thing, every man ought to govern himself in the interpretation of such passages, by what is clear and plain, and agreeable to the main scope and tenour of the bible, and to those natural notions which men have of God, and of his perfections. For when all is done, this is one of the surest ways of reasoning in religion; and whoever guides himself, and steers by this compass, can never err much; but whoever suffers himself to be led away by the appearance of some more obscure phrases in the expressions of scripture, and the glosses of men upon them, without regard to this rule, may run into the greatest delusions, may wander eternally, and lose himself in one mistake after another, and shall never find his way out of this endless labyrinth, but by this clue.

Archbishop Tillotson.

LINES WRITTEN FOR A YOUNG LADY'S ALBUM.

As bright a fortune wait thee, maid,
As aught that fairy tales have said!
Some genius of the enchanted ring
All perils ward, all favours bring!
The spirits of earth, the spirits of air,
And of each kind influence gathered there,
Be waiting about thee from hour to hour
As queen of some charm of magical power,—
To lay at thy feet life's sparkling treasures,
And bind thy brows with its rosiest pleasures!

Be such the wish of some idle line!
A better wish for thee, maid, is mine.

May thine be as much of fortune's share,
As thou'st worth to merit, and grace to wear,
And heart to improve, and strength to bear!
The beauty be thine that lasts for aye,
Though from feature and form it must pass away!
The genius of duty guard thy head,
When that of romance has grown weak or fled!
Good thoughts and thine own heart's purity
Be the spirits that ever wait on thee;
And for magical amulet or stone
Be the trust that is fixed on heaven alone!

Boston, Aug. 12th, 1823.

REVIEW.

ARTICLE IX.

A Collection of the Miscellaneous Writings of Professor Frisbie, with some Notices of his Life and Character. By Andrews Norton; Dexter Professor of Sacred Literature in Harvard University. Boston: Cummings, Hilliard and Co. 1823.

The influence of a superior mind over the society in which it is placed, has been felt and acknowledged in all ages; and the desire to continue this influence, even after death has torn from us the talents and virtues which were an honour and benefit to mankind, is the first feeling that succeeds to the grief which such

a privation inflicts. The heart which glowed only with kind affections is cold, and the wisdom, which directed this goodness to the happiest results, no longer dwells on earth. Yet we cannot resign what we have so highly prized. We look for that perpetuity of the spirit, in the scenes it has once enlightened, which Brown has happily styled the true metempsychosis of the soul :— when the thoughts, and feelings, and plans, that constituted the mind which lately shone in the midst of us, should still retain a portion of that immortality, which is essential to its essence, and spread its train of light over the darker or the brighter pages of our future history. Thus ordinary events, in the life of a distinguished man, become precious to those who knew him, and assume a moral expression and worth far superior in interest, to the most marvellous or novel incidents ; like the happy lights, which we sometimes catch on the simple landscape that daily meets our eyes, and which, to the mind of true taste, have a beauty that the rarest assemblage of natural objects does not possess. We are led by this feeling to collect the writings which genius has left behind, however small may be their number or extent, or however imperfectly they may indicate its real excellence. It is this which prompts us to gather from all, who have enjoyed any intimate intercourse with the being we lament, a minute relation of the impression, which his conversation and conduct have left on their minds ; that we may form to ourselves that intellectual portrait, so far exceeding in value those resemblances of the countenance, which are inexpressibly dear, when the original is no more. We owe to the existence of these feelings, the volume before us. It is an offering, bearing indeed a small proportion to the regrets and the desires by which it was demanded ; but it is one of high value, for it contains all that is left of that rare combination of intellectual and moral endowments, which gave to Mr. Frisbie's mind its peculiarity and its excellence.

Those who enjoyed much of his conversation, or are so fortunate, as to have heard his lectures, will scarcely believe, that so little remains of those treasures of wisdom and eloquence, which were dispensed by him with such gracefulness and ease. Can it be true, they will ask, that such discrimination and truth in principles, and such variety of aptness of illustration, were the spontaneous effusions of an intellect, which rarely submitted to the labour of written composition, or even of study ? Many will doubt, that more ample materials for forming a volume did not exist among Mr. Frisbie's papers, and will not admit the state of his eyes to be a circumstance, sufficient to account for this fact.

The brief memoir, and the extract from a letter of a friend,

which are placed at the beginning of this volume, are all the biographical notices we shall ever be able to obtain of Mr. Frisbie's life. The Editor has long known him intimately, and could easily command every thing which remains among his papers, or in the memory of his friends and associates, that might be useful to his purpose. Short as they are, they are written with a feeling and discrimination, which will recommend them to every one. The affecting and faithful view here given of his life and character, will secure the continuance of its influence over those who will see his face no more.

There were no unusual events in Mr. Frisbie's life; only two circumstances appear to have had a decided influence in the direction which was given to his mind by external causes. His, was a mind on which nature sets a stamp, that *no* circumstances perhaps could essentially alter. The circumstances to which we allude, were the religious opinions he had imbibed from his father, and the weakness of his sight.

'These religious opinions,' says the writer of the memoir, 'acquired strength, as his character strengthened; and even early in life, formed an essential part of it. From him likewise (his father) he derived the belief of some doctrines, which his maturer reason rejected. These doctrines, however, as I have heard him complain, retained an influence over his feelings, especially in moments of despondence, long after they had ceased to be a part of his faith. They tended to throw darkness and discomfort over his views of the character and moral government of God, and of the future condition of man.'

A man of Mr. Frisbie's clear understanding and kind affections, would, if left to his own reflections and study of the scriptures, have formed only rational and consoling views of religion. He would have found in the instructions and the life of our blessed Saviour, a confirmation of that goodness and compassion of the great Creator towards his imperfect offspring, in testimony of which all his works cry aloud. But in a mind disposed to piety, the religious impressions received from early education, are always permanent. They are bound to the character by associations, whose ties are almost indissoluble. In Mr. Frisbie, deep sensibility and delicacy of conscience, gave them unusual force. It is highly gratifying to those, who feel the importance of truth in religion, to find, that in the trying hour of life, when religion is the only thing that does not fail us, the faith of his more enlightened views, exerted its full influence on his soul, and that his thoughts of God and of a future life were no less delightful, than they had ever been sacred to his heart.

'In conversing on the subject,' says the writer of the letter, 'he once expressed to me, in very strong terms, his dread of death; and

said, that he considered it as the effect of his early religious associations; adding, that although these associations had long been opposed by the clearest convictions of his reason, yet he could not wholly avoid their influence on his mind. He then spoke particularly of the happiness of one of his friends, in always having cheerful and consoling views of religion and a future state. But in my last visit to him, the week before he died, I was unspeakably gratified to find, that he enjoyed the same happiness in the highest degree. Immediately on receiving me, he said, 'You know what a dread of death I have had. I can now not only view it with coolness, but the prospect of the future world is delightful to me.' His mind never appeared more clear and tranquil than it did, while he proceeded to speak of the world that was opening to him; and he spoke with an energy and sublimity of feeling peculiar to himself, and which no time can weaken in my memory.'

It was to the defect of eye sight, which deprived him of much enjoyment, that Mr. Frisbie was in no small degree indebted for the clearness and comprehension of his intellectual vision. His friends were always ready to read to him, and there are few standard works, in ancient or modern literature, which he had not perused by their aid. But we have often heard him complain of this unsatisfactory method of reading. 'Something in the book strikes me,' he would say, 'and a thousand relations, suggested by my own associations, rise up and fill my mind with new analogies and principles, and I cease to listen to what is read. I cannot, when alone, go over the book, resting on those parts which I wish to examine. Nor even if I had a friend by me, when I am in the mood for it, should I always be able to point out the passages, I desire to read again. Thus in order to gain much knowledge from books, I have been obliged to use a strict intellectual discipline, teaching my mind to attend to the main points in a work, and reserve its own reflections and fancies in such a way, as that they should not bring confusion into the acquisitions I had made, nor be utterly lost themselves.' It was this mental discipline, which formed those valuable habits of thought, for which he was so eminent. There was something luminous, accurate, and original in his way of viewing things, which we have not observed even in minds placed equally high in the scale of intellect. It was not merely the abundance or the justness of his thoughts, but their beauty and felicity that we admired. They always seemed to start up, as if by magic, just in their right places, and in their best lights.

The misfortune of being unable to use his eyes in study, occasioned a total change in Mr. Frisbie's plan of life. He had fixed on a profession, for which he was eminently qualified, and in which he would soon have become an ornament to his country.

There is no profession in which talents of a high order have a fairer field of exercise, or are more sure to reward the possessor with fame and fortune, than the bar. Mr. Frisbie had a decided taste for this profession, and in resigning it, he gave up not merely an object of interest. but of affection. Can any thing afford more delightful excitement to a mind, which is conscious of its powers, than to see the path of duty and distinction, on which it has fixed its earliest choice, opening before it, clogged with no obstructions, but what industry and talents may remove; and which serve only to quicken its capacities, and fire its emulation, to attain that point of excellence, on which its gaze is steadily fixed? This hope, long cherished in Mr. Frisbie's mind, the inspirer of its efforts, the sweetener of its toils and privations, was suddenly blasted. The disappointment cast a shade over the succeeding portions of his life, and, with his acute sensibility, it would, if he had not been a man of pure and elevated piety, have made him a misanthrope. But religion was not with him a thing of speculative belief, or even a mere rule of conduct; it descended into his heart, and sanctified its earthly emotions; it presided over his thoughts, and gave them their lofty determination. It was impossible that a mind so elastic and vigorous, should not spring up from this pressure, and find objects and occupations to supply those it had lost. He consented to occupy a station more humble than that to which he had believed himself destined: for he felt that even there he might be useful to others, and fulfil the great ends of his existence. He gradually rose, by his own merit, to more important offices in the University; and that which he held at the time of his death, afforded a wide scope for his talents, and was happily suited to his taste.

In this volume is reprinted the address delivered at the interment of Mr. Frisbie. At that moment of recent affliction, when it was believed that no words could do justice to the character of the deceased, or meet the sympathies of those who mourned his loss, this address was received by all, as worthy of the feelings by which it was demanded, and of the excellence and goodness it celebrated. The faithful outline here given of Mr. Frisbie's character, will be recognised by all to whom he was known. It is marked by many traits of superiority, but they are traits which were truly his. There is a tenderness and solemnity spread over the whole, which cannot fail to excite in every mind new aspirations after excellence, and a deep consciousness, that this is the only end, worthy of our pursuit. Following the address, is an obituary notice, in which Mr. Frisbie's character is delineated, with a feeling and discrimination, that could come only from one who had entered deeply into that peculiar com-

bination of moral and intellectual endowments, for which he was pre-eminent.

The four articles, which follow, are Mr. Frisbie's. They have all been published before, and there are few persons, who feel any interest in American literature, by whom they are not possessed, and often perused. But we are glad to have them collected in one book, united with all that it has been possible to gather of his writings and history, and enshrined in those praises and regrets, which so justly represent the public feeling towards him. We prize this little volume as a nucleus round which all our tender recollections may cluster; and we invest it with a beauty and value, which the mind knows how to shed on the most trifling objects, when associated with its higher and dearer sentiments. We have nothing to regret in these writings, but that there are no more of them. They are a fair sample of Mr. Frisbie's mind; and to those who could read them, and not find a wisdom and eloquence, a richness and chasteness of imagination, belonging only to the highest order of minds, we should not expect, by any description of ours, to afford a just idea of his powers. While reading them, we realize more fully what we have lost. The inaugural address revealed his genius to many, by whom it was before unmarked, and excited in all expectations, which death only has disappointed. Our inclination would lead us to extract some of the fine passages in these writings, which would justify our praises; but we trust they are familiar to most of our readers. The influence which literature and morals reciprocally exercise, is illustrated in the address with philosophic accuracy, and the feeling of elevated morality. We cannot forbear to extract the passage on Lord Byron.

'But in no productions of modern genius is the reciprocal influence of morals and literature more distinctly seen, than in those of the author of Childe Harold. His character produced the poems, and it cannot be doubted, that his poems are adapted to produce such a character. His heroes speak a language, supplied not more by imagination, than consciousness. They are not those machines, that, by a contrivance of the artist, send forth a music of their own; but instruments, through which he breathes his very soul, in tones of agonized sensibility, that cannot but give a sympathetic impulse to those who hear. The desolate misanthropy of his mind rises and throws its dark shade over his poetry, like one of his own ruined castles; we feel it to be sublime; but we forget, that it is a sublimity it cannot have, till it is abandoned by every thing that is kind, and peaceful, and happy, and its halls are ready to become the haunts of outlaws and assassins. Nor are his more tender and affectionate passages those to which we can yield ourselves without a feeling of uneasiness. It is not that we can here and there select a

proposition formally false or pernicious; but that he leaves an impression unfavourable to a healthy state of thought and feeling, peculiarly dangerous to the finest minds and most susceptible hearts. They are the scene of a summer evening, where all is tender, and beautiful, and grand; but the damps of disease descend with the dews of heaven, and the pestilent vapours of night are breathed in with the fragrance and balm, and the delicate and fair are the surest victims of the exposure.'

One passage more we extract from the inaugural address, though it must be remembered by all who heard it. It is one of those felicities of thought, which it is the privilege of genius only to suggest; and it enforces a principle of which Mr. Frisbie deeply felt the importance, the principle of availing ourselves of the aid of religion in the formation of the moral and intellectual character; from which alone it can derive permanent beauty and elevation.

'Miss Edgeworth has so cautiously combined the features of her characters, that the predominant expression is ever what it should be; she has shown us, not vices ennobled by virtues, but virtues degraded and perverted by their union with vices. The success of this lady has been great; but had she availed herself more of the motives and sentiments of religion, we think it would have been greater. She has stretched out a powerful hand to the impotent in virtue; and had she added, with the apostle, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, we should almost have expected miracles from its touch.'

In Mr. Frisbie's remarks on the right and duty of Government to provide for the support of religion by law, we perceive that sense of the importance of religion to man, which appeared in all his conversation and actions; and which, we think, was the principal source of the peculiar beauty of his mind. In him earnestness was the necessary consequence of conviction. He regarded the provisions of the law for the support of religion in this state, as the chief means of preserving the sobriety and virtue of its citizens, which, though inherited from our forefathers, would not have been secure, without the aid of salutary institutions; and he trembled at the thought, that, these institutions, which had stood the test of long experience, should be wantonly given up. The following passage closes this article.

'It is a maxim in politics, that the actual results of any important change often differ most widely from the anticipations of theory; and of course that innovations, though sometimes necessary to be made, are always experiments of hazard. This consideration ought to have the greatest weight in the present instance, because we may have all the advantage of the experiment without any of the danger. The existing system is believed by many to have produced

incalculable benefits; and by none will it be maintained to be an evil so intolerable as to demand an immediate alteration. In the neighbouring states, the experiment of the change is now making. If, upon full trial, this change should not be found to occasion the mischiefs that are apprehended from it, still more, if it should appear positively beneficial, we may at any time imitate their example, and reap all the advantages of their experience. But if, as is most solemnly feared by some of our wisest and best men, the reverse of all this should be proved by the event; if we should see in these states, notwithstanding the protracted operation of established sentiments and habits, one after another of the citizens, under various pretexts, withdrawing their aid from the support of religion, or neglecting to attach themselves to any society for that purpose, till the countenance of numbers shall take away the disgrace of singularity; if, as a necessary consequence of this, we should see parishes broken up; the clergy, from the poverty and precariousness of their support, losing their respectability, and men of talents no longer entering the profession; if we should see youth growing up without the regular instructions of the sabbath, the general sense of the sanctions of futurity disappearing, and the tone of morals universally relaxed; what reason shall we have to bless God, that we have been saved from evils so deplorable. Nor let it be thought, should we follow in this dangerous path, we might at any time retrace our steps. It is easy to relax existing obligations; but to bind them again upon men, when they have been once loosened, is at all times most difficult, and would in this case be impossible; since the very causes which would require such a measure—the increase of irreligion and vice—would most effectually prevent its adoption. Enthusiasm and fanaticism might still occasionally shoot over the multitude, and shed on crowds of gazers a glare of wild and useless excitement; but a system of rational and regular instruction and worship could not be restored. That steady light, which shines into every man's dwelling, and guides him to his daily occupations and duties, which ripens the fruit and tinges the flowers of the earth, and spreads its brightness over a serene and glorious heaven, will have gone down upon us.'—pp. 118—120.

The extracts, which this volume contains, from manuscript notes of Mr. Frisbie's lectures, will, we are persuaded, be received by many as the most valuable part of the book; not merely because the public was not in possession of them before, but on account of their own intrinsic value. We have heard some persons express surprise, that notes, so imperfect and inadequate to afford an estimate of his lectures, should have been published. From them, however, we learn Mr. Frisbie's opinion, and his mode of reasoning on the philosophy of morals, which are both able and original. Had these lectures been noted down in all their grace and eloquence, as they flowed spontaneously

from the mind of their author, we should possess a work which we might be proud to compare with any other on the same subject in our language. Still, however, the philosophic reader would dwell with most interest on its accurate investigation of the nature of man, and on its just and original views of the foundation of our moral feelings. The richness and aptness of its illustrations would have gratified our taste, and lent attractions to its opinions; but could they have materially affected our sense of their importance and truth, or our respect for the mind that suggested them?

The complex nature of human actions, and of the emotions they excite in our minds, has given occasion to those unsatisfactory theories in morals, which are evidently the result of partial and inaccurate views of the subject. The system of utility, of self-love, of obedience to the will of God for the sake of everlasting happiness, (which is only a more refined sort of self-love) and of sympathy, are founded on phenomena in the nature and condition of man, which actually take place, and the several defects of those systems arise either from an inaccurate analysis of results which are extremely complex, or from an omission of some important instances. Nature seems to have charged a few minds of superior endowments, with the intellectual interests of the human race, and allowed them an insight into her mysteries, that they might dispense her oracles to the numerous and busy throng who are destined never to enter her temple, but only to gaze in admiration without, on its beauty and splendour. Yet it is mortifying that these privileged few should be so liable to err in their investigations of her laws and operations. The errors which great minds have adopted, and in which they have persevered, when a far humbler intellect would have detected the fallacy of their reasoning, afford us one of the most affecting lessons of human frailty. Although one great cause of these errors is, as we before said, an inaccurate analysis of the phenomena under review; yet there is another cause, which we are inclined to think has had far more efficacy, than has been generally ascribed to it. This is the influence of authority. How many maxims have been received as elementary and self-evident on the authority of former philosophers, whose wisdom and learning had made them oracles to their age! Even in our own enlightened times, philosophy has its false gods, whose temples afford a refuge to those who have defied the laws of common sense and experience. We have only to recollect, that the absurd system of Berkley, and much of the dangerous reasoning of Hume, are founded on errors received as incontrovertible maxims from the ancient philosophers. Even the match-

less genius of Bacon was engrossed in pulling down the idols which deluded the votaries of science, and could do little more than point out the true path of knowledge in which his successors have so rapidly advanced.

It would be a curious and interesting employment to investigate the errors which philosophy has sanctioned and perpetuated; to trace and estimate their influence on the progress of the human mind; to note, when truth has shrunk under their dominion, and when she has maintained her own supremacy; to observe, that while hidden under the rubbish of ancient systems, falsely called philosophy, she has been rarely discerned by the most diligent of her seekers, but that she has by native energy gradually worked out her own liberation; and that the greatest praise to which those, called her discoverers, are in most instances entitled, is, that they had the good fortune to catch and recognize the first ray of her light on her emerging from the obscurity. But we are wandering from our original purpose, in noticing this source of error; which was to show that Mr. Frisbie's mind was, in an unusual degree, exempt from its influence. This exemption is in a great measure to be ascribed to the vigour and originality of his own intellect. But it was in part owing to his inability to study the works of other philosophers, and the natural result of the necessity he was under of using his own mind chiefly, in the prosecution of those interesting inquiries concerning the moral and intellectual nature of man, which constantly engaged his attention. The subject of morals was the favourite theme of his meditations. Every thing which he wrote or spoke bore some allusion to it. The phenomena of the material, as well as of the intellectual world, assumed to him a moral aspect, and were invested with unwonted grace and beauty, by the feelings with which he viewed them.

The principal doctrine in moral philosophy is thus expressed by himself. 'Right is something of which our idea is simple—which is what it is by its very nature, independently of any consequences. It is that, which, under all the circumstances of a case, gives us the belief that an action should be performed. It is that which we approve in the actions of others, and reflect upon with satisfaction in our own.' Of moral obligation, he says, 'All the theories on the subject may be resolved into two; that which refers it to prudence, and that which refers it to conscience. For when I ask, why am I obliged to perform a particular act of benevolence? if it be answered, because it will promote the general good; the question returns, why am I obliged to promote the general good? There are then three answers which may be given; either 1. to promote indirectly

my own good; or 2. because it is the command of God; or 3. because it is right. If, again, I ask, why I am obliged to obey the command of God? only two answers can be given; 1. because he will reward me, if I do, and punish me, if I do not; or 2. because it is right. Thus we come at last to prudence and right.'

The objections which may be urged against the theories referred to prudence, induced Mr. Frisbie to reject them. 'If,' says he, 'obligation might be resolved into prudence, or a regard to our own gratification, there would be no distinction between moral pleasures and other pleasures, except in degree. A regard to the former could be urged on no other ground than a regard to the latter. Nor would there be any proper moral distinction in motives; since self-interest is supposed by this theory to be the motive of every act.' He therefore adopted that theory which refers our moral sentiments to conscience, that is, to an original principle which cannot be resolved into any other. In rejecting those theories which may be resolved into prudence, and in ascribing the origin of our moral sentiments to an ultimate principle in our nature, Mr. Frisbie's opinions coincide with those of Professor Brown.

It is extremely interesting to observe two superior minds, who, without any intercourse with each other, had, in their investigations of subjects so important, arrived at the same results. Had Mr. Frisbie, like Brown, written his lectures, we think we should have found in them the same original and accurate turn of thought, the same beauty of illustration, and glow of piety which mark that distinguished writer; with probably more directness and simplicity in the thought, and more clearness and compression in the style.

The opinions of Brown concerning our moral sentiments, are, that the emotions, which, for want of a more brief expression, he denominates feelings of approbation and disapprobation, arise in the mind, on the contemplation of certain actions, which we call virtuous or vitious, in consequence of the original constitution of our nature. This principle of moral approbation and disapprobation is elementary in our nature, and not resolvable into any other. Virtue is nothing more than an agent acting in certain circumstances, and with certain intentions. Merit, virtue, obligation, as distinguished from each other, are merely abstractions of the mind, and have not in reality any separate existence. According to Brown, an action cannot be obligatory on the agent, and not approved by the observer; for these two are in fact the same thing. Virtue, considered apart from the virtuous agent, is only an abstraction of the mind, a general term, used

for the convenience of classing together a number of similar actions. If there were no virtuous agents in the universe, there would be no virtue. This is an abstract of Brown's theory of morals. Its similarity to Mr. Frisbie's will be readily perceived. The leading idea, that the foundation of our moral feelings is an elementary principle of our nature, not resolvable into the principle of utility, selfishness, sympathy, or any other, is the same in both. The objections which may be made to this theory are anticipated and satisfactorily answered by Mr. Frisbie. These objections are drawn from the facts, that some men have, in all ages, approved what was wrong, and disapproved what was right; whereas, if we had an intuitive sense of right, our moral judgments must be uniform. Mr. Frisbie does not contend for an intuitive sense of right, analogous to our external senses, such as has been called a moral sense: but only for an original capacity for approving what is right, and disapproving what is wrong, when these are perceived. It is his opinion, that, as most of our actions are complex, the influences of passion, society, and association, lead us to dwell more on the one class of elements, or on the other, than their true proportion warrants. We approve not what is wrong, but what is right in the complex action, passing over the wrong; which, if distinctly recognized, would alter, or even reverse, our judgments. The same objections are stated by Brown, and refuted by similar arguments.

'It is admitted, that there have been, in different ages and nations, many false moral judgments; but I think it will be found that a large proportion of these refer to actions which virtue is conceived to permit, not to require, in which her office is to limit, not to forbid. Many of these false judgments have related, for example, to indulgence in the pleasures of the senses. Other false judgments refer to actions which involve various and remote principles, actions which are complex, combining good and evil, which have different relations, and may be viewed in different lights. In all the cases which have been mentioned, it is not in the least inconsistent with the principle we have maintained, that men should be misled by ignorance, passion and custom. In approving or condemning such actions, the dispute would not be so much concerning first principles, as their application.

'The fact that many actions are complex and mixed, and may be regarded in different relations, is very important to be attended to, in reference to the present subject. An action may be, in some of its relations, undoubtedly innocent or virtuous; while in others it is undoubtedly wrong. To relieve a worthy person in distress is right; not to pay my debts, when I have the means, is wrong; may I then relieve such distress with the money promised to my creditor? To determine questions of this sort, many circumstances are sometimes

to be taken into view, some of which may be overlooked by one, which are observed by another.

'We must likewise remember the influence of association in varying moral judgments. In complex impressions, the character of the whole is derived from the character of the most striking parts. Our moral taste is thus affected in the same manner as our literary taste.

'If these considerations be well attended to and applied, will there be any greater difficulty in reconciling the variety in the moral judgments of mankind with the theory of intuitive perception, than with any other? That surely can be no objection to an hypothesis, which it might be proved, *a priori*, would follow from the hypothesis itself.

'To a being of perfect knowledge and wisdom, all moral, as well as all other truth, must be intuitive, because all possible relations are completely present to his mind at once; but by finite minds, as some of these relations may be either unknown or unattended to, and different relations observed by different persons, there will be different judgments.'—pp. 149—151.

After reading this analysis of the causes which modify our moral sentiments, we are surprised that Mr. Frisbie did not perceive that this was a more accurate description than he has made of the same phenomena in his first section. He there says, treating of right as a quality of actions—

'Right may be distinguished into absolute and relative; the former referring to the nature of actions considered in themselves; the latter, to actions considered relatively to the principles and motives of the agent. Those actions are absolutely right, which, under all the circumstances of the case, a perfectly well informed moral agent is morally obliged to perform. When an agent, determined to do his duty, is at a loss how to act, in a given instance, the object of his inquiry is, the absolute right of actions. Those actions are relatively right, which proceed from a conscientious principle of duty in the agent Hence the same action may be absolutely right, and relatively wrong, and vice versa.'

Now we will venture to assert, that, an action cannot be absolutely right, and relatively wrong, (using the terms in their usual acceptation) and continue to be the same moral action. An action may be absolutely, that is, completely right, or it may be only partially right, that is, made up of motives and results, partly virtuous and partly vicious, but these two must be different actions, and it is the latter which Mr. Frisbie intends by actions which may be relatively right or wrong. In the first instance given in illustration by Mr. Frisbie, 'the relieving the distress of a man in order to bind him to my interest, for the sake of a criminal purpose,' there is scarcely any element of right; and an impartial observer, who was acquainted with the whole action.

that is, with its motives as well as its effects, would regard it with a decided feeling of disapprobation. In the second instance given by Mr. Frisbie,—St. Paul's persecution of the christians,—the action was complex. It was right in St. Paul to act in conformity to what he believed to be his duty; but in consequence of the influences, which (as we have already said) may pervert our moral judgments, he had been led to feel moral approbation for a course of conduct possessing a very small portion of those elements, which only, when fairly perceived, excite this emotion.

If our actions are thus complex, and the mind, in consequence of influences to which it must be more or less subject, is led to dwell more on some elements of the action than their proportion warrants, and if our moral judgments are thus liable to be perverted, it may be asked, of what avail is our capacity of moral feeling, since the judgments which must be the occasions of these feelings may be erroneous, and of consequence the feelings of approbation and disapprobation different from what the case ought truly to have excited? If moral feelings arise in the mind on the perception of certain actions, and if these actions are complex, and fitted to excite a blended feeling of approval and blame, it must require an impartial state of the mind, and a power of analysis which we cannot expect should be universal, to form that accurate estimate of the action which would produce a just moral feeling. This instability we should expect to find in any class of feelings, which depended for their exciting causes on judgments which in a creature so fallible as man must necessarily be often deficient in impartiality and discrimination. But the truth is, this difference in the moral judgments of men is far less than has been supposed, and never has been so great as to reverse all moral distinction; which would have been the case, if they were not original, and too firmly fixed in our nature to be overturned by any influences to which we are exposed.

Mr. Frisbie's remarks on Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments (contained in an article on that subject first printed in the North American Review, and reprinted in this volume) coincide in a remarkable manner with those made by Professor Brown in his examination of this subject. Mr. Frisbie was himself struck with this similarity of his own opinions to Brown's, when he read his lectures, which he did a short time before his death. 'I found him (says the writer of his memoir) engaged in their perusal, and asked him, how he was pleased with them. His answer was, "I ought to be pleased with them, for he has what I considered some of my best thoughts."'

In his remarks on Smith's theory, after showing that the sentiment of approbation is something different from sympathy, and

that either may exist without the other, he allows that 'the two sentiments often coincide, and are mutually heightened by their union.' 'Dr. Smith,' he adds, 'observed this, and it led him, we venture to affirm, to the error of his work, if it be, as we suppose, an error. He remarked the peculiar satisfaction with which we enter into the feelings of the virtuous, a satisfaction founded, we think, upon previous approbation; and not distinguishing the parts of this blended emotion, he assumed that as the essence which is only an effect. Accordingly he has, we think, throughout his work denominated that sentiment moral approbation, which is properly only a consequence of it.' According to Dr. Smith's theory, we allow merit to those who are the objects of a gratitude, which we can enter into and go along with. 'This,' says Mr. Frisbie, 'excludes from merit many actions, which the common judgment of mankind has agreed to consider as possessing that quality in a high degree; such as magnanimity, temperance, fortitude, patience, and the forgiveness of injuries.' These, and a few other passages, which we might extract from Mr. Frisbie's remarks, contain the substance of Brown's criticism on Dr. Smith's theory, which may be thus summed up.

If sympathy is the foundation of our moral sentiments, it follows that wherever there is sympathy, there is moral approbation, and where there is no sympathy, there can be no moral approbation. But there are many cases of sympathy in which no feeling of moral approbation is excited, as our sympathy in the joys, sorrows, and tastes of others; and there are cases devoid of sympathy, in which we do feel moral approbation, as the virtues of patience, self-denial, and many others. Further, as sympathy is nothing but a reflection of the feelings of others, it cannot originate the very feelings it reflects, any more than the light reflected from the objects of creation around can be regarded as the source which supplies the never failing lustre of the orb of day. Sympathy therefore, so far from accounting for our moral emotions, presupposes their existence.

The coincidence of thought in these two writers, will be easily perceived. It would appear more plainly to any one who may have the curiosity to compare the 80th and 81st lecture in Brown's philosophy with Mr. Frisbie's remarks on Smith's theory. This undesigned coincidence gives additional weight to their opinions. We cannot but regard the views of the origin of our moral sentiments, which are briefly stated in Mr. Frisbie's notes, and more elaborately explained and illustrated in Professor Brown's Philosophy, as highly important and as coming nearer to the truth than those of any other philosopher with which we are acquaint-

ed. They afford a foundation to morals which is noble and sure, a foundation not liable to the objections which have been urged, with truth, against the systems generally received, and which have given plausibility to those skeptical views of the distinctions of right and wrong, which cannot be indulged without danger to our virtue. For the truth of this system we would appeal to the consciousness of each individual, the only proper tribunal in this case. Is there any one who will not admit, that his feelings of duty, of self approbation, and of remorse, differ essentially from any other feelings of which he is susceptible; that the emotion which rises in our minds on the contemplation of virtue, is not the feeling we experience for what is simply useful, or agreeable, nor resolvable into it; that the pain we feel for having done wrong, bears no resemblance to the sorrow which the loss of any pleasure or advantage excites in our minds; and that although we sympathize in the moral emotions of our fellow creatures, this is but a reflection of feelings previously existing, as is the case in our joys, sorrows, and tastes? 'Let any man (says Mr. Frisbie) analyze his principles of conduct, and he will find, after enumerating all the motives of interest to virtuous conduct, a sense of duty still left.' Although we do not undertake to assert, that the moral distinctions, which, with all our sophistry, we cannot help recognizing every hour of our lives, have existed from eternity and are essential elements of mind, (though for ourselves, we do not doubt this) yet thus much cannot be denied; that they are coeval with the race of man, and that unless we admit them to be original and elementary principles in our nature, we must give up the moral attributes of the Deity, and of consequence all that is worthy the name of religion. Even the heathen, in worshipping idols of wood and stone, the work of mens hands, were obliged to invest them in imagination with those moral qualities, which only can excite in the breast of man the emotions of veneration and love.

When we read the eloquent passage at the close of the section on appetites, we realize how much we have lost by Mr. Frisbie's extemporaneous method of instruction. Our regret is renewed by the recollection, that he who possessed the power to delineate in a manner so faithful and affecting the dangerous tendency of vicious indulgence, and to set forth virtue in all her loveliness to the generous emulation of youth, is now no more; that one who had studied the principles of our nature, their development in early life, and the circumstances which influence the formation of character, with the accuracy of a philosopher and the zeal of a philanthropist, has quitted forever that sphere of action, where his labours had been so useful.

Mr. Frisbie had a peculiar influence over the minds of his pupils. All who could think for themselves perceived the force and simplicity of his reasoning. All who had taste and sensibility were captivated by his eloquence, which seemed to scatter roses on the paths by which he led them to the heights of moral and intellectual excellence. This influence was confirmed by his sincerity. What he enforced he believed; what he described he felt. Even his own eloquent language was inadequate to paint the beauty of that virtue which glowed in his breast. He possessed that simplicity of manner which is a characteristic of superior intellect, and the natural effect of that rectitude of conscience, which feels how vain it is to deceive men, while the eye of God always rests upon us. Though in him it was devoid of external gracefulness or elegance, it engaged confidence and affection in a far greater degree than the most polished manner which had less of directness and simplicity.

Shall we not be allowed still to look back with regret to one in whom there was so much to endear him to our affections, so much to render him valuable to society? He was taken from us in the ripeness of his manhood, in the high advancement of his intellectual powers, in the purity and completion of his christian character, as far as this can be gained on earth. He left an important station, which from its peculiar duties and functions, afforded him the means of benefiting society, beyond almost any other in which he could have been placed. He was taken from a circle of men set apart like himself for the great object of the moral and intellectual improvement of others, like him too possessed of enlightened zeal in the cause of truth and virtue. Even among them he was distinguished, not only for the peculiar, but in some respects for the superior character of his mind. To all their plans for the advancement of science and religion he brought the aid of his bright unerring intellect and of his elevated and rational views. He was not disposed to rest satisfied with the present improvements in education, great as they have of late been. His enlightened philanthropy and his confidence in the goodness of God, as well as his careful observation of human nature, led him to believe that the condition of man still admitted of many meliorations, which it was in the power of man by well directed efforts to procure for himself. He believed that moral improvement was a natural result of the cultivation of our intellectual powers; and where this result failed to take place, it was not because such an union was impracticable, but because the means for securing it were injudiciously selected or applied. Men who do not possess superior abilities, how great soever may be their industry or their acquisitions, seldom advance beyond

their predecessors. It belongs to genius alone, to strike out new paths of science; to invent new and improved methods of arriving at desirable results; to make philosophy practical, when only she can be useful. Placed in heaven, she is indeed a noble object of speculation; but she must be brought down to earth, before she can exercise an efficient influence over the condition and character of man. Mr. Frisbie was a man of genius, and sound understanding, and of uncommonly rational and practical views; but possessing at the same time, that enthusiasm and philanthropy, which prompts to novel attempts for the benefit of mankind. Notwithstanding the great improvements, which have been made in this age in the means and methods of education, there are some evils which still press heavily on our public seminaries, and greatly impair the value of the literary advantage they afford. The acquisition of knowledge in every department of literature and science has been greatly facilitated, and its objects rendered more useful and more sure. It is however to be regretted, that a system, by which these means should be as successfully applied to the development and security of the moral character, is still a desideratum in education. Mr. Frisbie thought seriously on this subject. We have heard him lament that the methods hitherto adopted for its accomplishment had been so little successful, and express his intention to attempt something in the cause, if his life should be prolonged. He was sanguine as well as earnest. He did not fear, as some, who have thought with interest on the subject have done, that little would be effected; that in public seminaries, the degree of freedom, which is essential to the fair development of the character, must, in many instances, generate folly and excess. 'I cannot doubt, (we have heard him say) that at the flexible age at which young men enter college, when the affections are warm and readily engaged, when the beauty of virtue and the attraction of noble and generous qualities are so powerfully felt, the ardour and emulation of youth might be enlisted on the side of virtue, and its enterprise and industry directed to the attainment of moral as well as intellectual superiority.' This cannot be done merely by lectures, however fine, which are listened to by the students as a task and forgotten as soon as they are ended, or by rules which a fine or a little address would enable them to transgress, or by punishments in which they are sure of the countenance and sympathy of their classmates. It must be effected by a discipline which would remove as much as possible the temptations and the opportunities to transgress, and still more by a personal influence of the instructor over the minds of his pupils in developing and strengthening the good principles

of our nature while it counteracts the power, which the daring and intriguing, however immoral, exercise over the susceptible and credulous minds of their companions.

It was in attempts to solve the great problem of education, that Mr. Frisbie's mind was most frequently engaged; in endeavours to estimate justly and to apply skilfully, the power which it gives us over the future character and destiny of the young. Even *his* genius and zeal might have failed, as that of many others had failed before, to devise a system which, while it retained all the literary advantages we now possess, might assure the parent, when he trusts his son to the charge of those, who hold in no small degree the destinies of the next generation in their hands, that he shall be returned to him without stain, fixed in those moral and religious principles which, however humble or elevated may be his station, will make it good for others and for himself that he was born. But though Mr. Frisbie might not have accomplished all that he wished, it cannot be doubted, that a mind like his, fixed as it was with interest on the subject, would have accomplished something. Of this at least we are sure, that his personal influence was great among his pupils, and that he was more and more impressed with his responsibility in the use of this influence. It is in this view of his character that his loss to the institution of which he was a member appears most severe. It is not his fine genius merely, which we have to lament, but that pure morality and strong religious principle, with which it was combined, and by which all its uses were sanctified. Conscience was his moving principle, urging him, in spite of the lassitude which ill health produced, and the excuses, with which this, and his imperfect eye sight might have supplied him, to use the high powers with which God had gifted him, in the service of virtue and truth, as talents, of which he must one day render up a strict account.

There are a few pieces of poetry in this volume. They bear that character of refinement and seriousness for which Mr. Frisbie's mind was distinguished. Though possessing no unusual merit themselves, they will be acceptable to his friends, for whom principally this volume was published. We think, however, we have seen better specimens of his poetry than any in this collection.

ARTICLE X.

The claims of Jesus; a sermon preached in Calcutta, on Sunday, Sept. 23, 1821. By William Adam. Calcutta, printed at the Eurasian press, Chouringhee. 1821.

Unitarianism and Trinitarianism contrasted. A sermon delivered at the ordination of the Rev. Jared Sparks, to the pastoral care of the first independent church in Baltimore, May 5, 1819. By William Ellery Channing, minister of the church of Christ in Federal street, Boston. Calcutta, reprinted at the Unitarian press, 1822.

The attention of the religious, as well as of the learned world, has of late years been much directed to Hindostan. The population of that country comprehends Christians, Mohammedans, Parsees (or disciples of the religion of Zoroaster,) Jews, and Hindoos. Christianity had a footing in India at a period of unknown antiquity. Vasco de Gama, when he first visited the Malabar coast about the year 1500, is said to have found forty-four churches. It is their tradition that the Apostle St. Thomas introduced the Gospel into India, and Dr. Buchanan was shown the place where he landed. The Mohammedans, who in some parts of Hindostan are the largest class of the population, are descended from the Arab, Persian, and Tartar invaders who at different times overran this rich and fertile country. The Parsees are numerous in the neighbourhood of Bombay, and further west towards the boundary of Persia. The Jews abound in the south of the peninsula, and are divided into black and white Jews. The latter say they came from India after the destruction of the second temple. The former are supposed to have emigrated at a much earlier period. But the mass of the inhabitants are Hindoos, the Aborigines of the country.* Their numbers have been variously estimated, from forty to two hundred millions. The former estimate is probably nearest to the truth.

The Brahminical religion is coextensive with the territory of Hindostan. Of the sacred books, which expound it, those held in the highest veneration are the Vedas, which are said to have been written by Brahma, the first deity in their mythology. The period of their composition is probably a question of interminable controversy. According to Sir William Jones, the remotest age to which they can be asssigned is a hundred years before the time of Moses, though the Brahmins claim for them a much higher antiquity. Besides these, there are several other

* The Brahmins have a tradition that their ancestors came from the north, and brought their religion and customs into Hindostan.

ancient books of subordinate authority, as the Upavedas, the Vedangas, and the Institutes of Menoo.

These books comprise not only the religious, but the political and scientific system of the Hindoos. Their theology, as it has been understood both by foreigners, and, in recent times at least, by natives, is the grossest idolatry. The principal divinities are three; Brahma the creator, Vishnoo the preserver, and Seva or Mahadeo the destroyer and reproducer. The wife of Brahma is Seraswattee, the goddess of learning; of Vishnoo, Sree the goddess of plenty; and of Seva, Parvatee the goddess of time. Vishnoo has been incarnate nine times, and is expected to appear again. Besides these, there is a prodigious number of inferior deities, presiding over the elements, death and hell, the rivers, plants, animals, minerals, heavenly bodies, &c. The Hindoos believe in a future life and retribution, and in a transmigration of souls. Their religious duties are part of them innocent; such as frequent ablutions, and abstinence from animal food, a duty inferred from the doctrine last named. Others are of the most heinous character; such as self torture and immolation; infanticide, and burning of women. With regard to their morals, there is an extraordinary difference of testimony. By some who have described them, they have been praised, and by others condemned, in terms altogether unqualified. The Abbé Dubois and Mr. Ward, missionaries among them, describe them as being depraved to an unprecedented, and most unnatural degree. Mr. Hastings on the contrary, whose opportunities of knowing them were inferior to none, represented them as 'gentle, benevolent, and as exempt from the worst propensities of human passion as any people upon the face of the earth; faithful and affectionate in service, and submissive to legal authority.' Sir John Malcolm deposed before the British house of commons that the Hindoos of the interior 'are not more distinguished by their lofty stature, and robust frame of body than they are for some of the finest qualities of the mind;' and another individual, who had been thirty-two years among them, said upon oath; "if —— schools established in every village for teaching reading, writing and arithmetick, the general practice of hospitality and charity among each other, and above all a treatment of the female sex, full of confidence respect and delicacy, are among the signs which denote a civilized people, then the Hindoos are not inferior to the nations of Europe.' It is generally allowed that they are humane and voluptuous,—the virtue and vice of their climate; and there is a considerable agreement in representing them as artful and regardless of truth. Whether this representation is extensively just, or only with respect to the trading part

who may have learned their dexterity from foreigners with whom they have trafficked, is an unsettled question. Of their intellectual habits we may form some judgment from the assertion of the Hindoo editor of the Brahminical Magazine, in the third number of that journal, that 'during a few years past, hundreds of works on different subjects, such as theology, law, logick, grammar and astronomy, have been written by the natives of Bengal alone.'

The first missionary operations in Hindostan in recent times were begun soon after the Europeans gained a footing in the east. Goa was taken by the Portuguese in 1510, and within as short a period as gave opportunity for the condition of the country to be understood with any accuracy, St. Francis Xavier set off under the patronage of John III. to christianize it. Perhaps no person who has engaged in such an enterprize since the primitive times of Christianity was better qualified for it than this intrepid, indefatigable, self denying and accomplished Jesuit. The chief scene of his success was however not Hindostan, though he baptized there some thousands of idolaters in one month. In Japan he founded a church which at one time is said to have consisted of 600,000 persons, and was on his way to China, when he died, about eleven years after his arrival in India. The ancient Syrian Christians on the Malabar coast of course fell under the notice of their Catholic neighbours, and at a council held by the Archbishop of Goa, in 1699, their books were condemned to the flames. A part made a compromise, and their descendants are called the Syrian-Roman Christians. The total number of the three classes is estimated at 200,000.

Next to the Roman Catholics, the greatest number of converts has been made by the Lutherans of Denmark. The missionaries Ziegenbalg and Plutscho established themselves in 1706 at Tranquebar, 120 miles below Madras on the Coromandel coast. Their operations and those of their successors were subsequently extended through the Carnatic, and into the neighbouring provinces. More than fifty missionaries have been employed, among whom was that man of admirable endowments and virtue, Swartz. He went to India in 1750, and died there in 1807. The mission has for some years past been under the patronage of the English society for promoting Christian knowledge. The whole number of converts, up to the year 1747, which we understand to include Europeans as well as natives, was reckoned at 8056. Dr. Carey a few years since, stated the number of natives who had been baptized since the establishment of the mission at 40,000. That the number of real converts, however, is harder to be ascertained, appears from the following particu-

lar account of one tenth part of them, given by Brown in his history of missions (I. 241.) in a passage which we understand him to quote from the transactions of the Missionary society.

'In the course of this journey, Mr. Gericke baptized about 1300 persons, and after he left the country, the native teachers formed eighteen new congregations, and baptized 2700 people, so that the whole number amounted to no fewer than 4000. Highly as we venerate the character of Mr. Gericke, we cannot but express the strongest disapprobation of his conduct on this occasion. Had the most of these people afforded such evidence of their sincere conversion to the christian faith as to warrant their baptism, this certainly might have ranked among the most extraordinary events in the history of the church in ancient or modern times; it might even have been considered as a kind of parallel to the day of Pentecost. But we see nothing in the account to authorize such an exalted idea of it; and indeed we are sorry to understand that most of these people have little knowledge of christianity, and still less of its spirit. Their chief inducement for professing themselves christians, was a hope which they foolishly entertained, that they would then be exempted from the publick burdens.'

The next considerable enterprize of this nature is that of the English Baptists. Carey and Thomas went to India in 1793, and the principal scene of operations was six years after fixed at Serampore, near Calcutta, on the arrival of four other missionaries. Among these were Ward and Marshman. Ward had been a printer, and Marshman a schoolmaster, and to these occupations they have chiefly devoted themselves in furthering the objects of their mission. More than six years passed without an idolater being converted; but in 1800 one native was baptized, and the following year five others. 'We have now,' says Mr. Marshman, (Oct. 4th, 1801) 'six baptized Hindoos, whom we esteem more precious than gems. Yet we need great prudence in our conduct towards them. We have to encourage, to strengthen, to counteract, to advise, to disapprove, to teach, and to do all in such a manner, as to endear our Saviour and ourselves to them.' Nineteen were baptized in the two following years, but already 'the missionaries were much afflicted by the irregularities of some of the native brethren.' In 1811, the whole number of persons who had been baptized, including Europeans, who were about two fifths of the whole, was 426. 'Some' says the periodical account of that year 'have died in the faith; some have been excluded on account of impropriety in their behaviour, though most of these have been again restored; and some, we regret to add, have relapsed into Paganism, and that in some instances not long after their baptism. But yet the greater part

of them adhere stedfastly to their Christian profession, and though it cannot be denied that they have many imperfections, yet their character has been materially improved by the Gospel, and is in many respects ornamental to it.' In 1818 the baptists had eleven missionaries at Serampore and Calcutta, and fourteen European agents in other parts of the peninsula; most of them in Bengal. At the same time, Winslow, in his history of missions, says that it had been stated, though he does not know upon what authority, that the number of supposed converts exceeded a thousand.

But it is not in the number of their converts that the most honourable proof of the Baptist labours is seen. Dr. Carey, either perceiving that it was not chiefly by preaching that he was essentially to serve christianity in India, or else giving way to his extraordinary genius for literary occupation, soon applied himself to the task of translating the scriptures into the Indian languages. The Quarterly Reviewers,—no indulgent judges, when laurels are to be awarded to a man not college bred,—call him the most learned orientalist that ever lived, and his immense labours do even more than justify this praise. Four years ago versions of the Bible into forty four different languages were either printed, or entirely or partly prepared, and this great work of literary toil and Christian benevolence, was proceeding at the expense of about 13,000 dollars annually.

Other English societies have employed missionaries in Hindostan. In 1805 two agents of the London Missionary Society established themselves at Vizigapatam, a city in the province of Orissa, about half way between Calcutta and Madras. They lived but a short time, and were succeeded in 1809 by two others. Other missionaries of this society have been fixed at Travancore, Madras, in the Mysore country, and near Calcutta. We have seen no record of any success of theirs, except the conversion of a Brahmin, who became a preacher, and was employed in translating the scriptures.

The American board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was instituted in 1810. For a very short time the project seemed to languish, but in the following year a donation of thirty thousand dollars was received from one individual, and considerable contributions from other sources. The attention of this society was first directed to India, and five missionaries were sent out to that country early in 1812. Two of them, soon after their arrival, announced that they had become Baptists, and withdrew themselves from the service of their employers. In 1814, one of the remaining three returned home; the other two fixed their residence in Bombay, which has ever since been the seat of the

mission. In 1816, they were joined by another labourer, and two years after by two more. A printer was added to the establishment in 1821. The same year the number was again diminished by the death of one of the missionaries, and the return of another to America. One of those who remained, with the printer, was recently, and we believe is still stationed at Bombay, and the other two at different places, within about twenty miles of that city. From their schools and tracts, the effect of which, from the gradual nature of their operation, cannot yet be tested by the experiment, they hope for more success than they have experienced from what they account the great instrument, their preaching. In 1818, they reported to their employers, 'we can relate to you no work of saving grace among the people with whom we labour, nor do we know that any special success has recently attended the means of Christian instruction at other missionary stations in India;' and again at the close of the same year, 'we regret that we cannot send you the joyful tidings of wandering souls gathered into the fold of Christ through our ministry.' Mr. Graves writes in 1819; 'surely every thing we have done, or can do, seems like throwing straws to turn the current of the ocean.' In 1820, the prudential committee in their annual report say, 'it is still the great trial of these devoted servants of the Lord, to spend their strength in a field, on which there is scarcely rain or dew from on high.' In 1821, they quote thus from a letter of one of their agents; 'out of the tens of millions around us and the some thousands of those millions, whom we have invited to the great salvation, we know not of a single one inquiring what he must do to be saved;' and again in 1822, speaking of Mr. Newell, one of their first missionaries, then lately deceased, they say; 'though not permitted to see with his mortal eyes the seed of the word springing up and bringing forth fruit, he had for years enjoyed the privilege of sowing it, in a soil long desolate and barren, unvisited by showers from heaven, and uncheered by beams from the sun of Righteousness.' Nor have prospects brightened during the present year. In a letter received in March last, one of the missionaries says; 'the Lord sees fit to lay upon us his chastising rod, and still to withhold the influences of the spirit from the poor pagans, among whom we are placed.'

The numbers of nominal converts to Christianity which we have stated are by no means to be taken as a fair representation of the real success of the several missions. To persuade a Hindoo to be baptized is a far different thing from converting him. Dr. Buchanan gives but an unfavourable account of the Catholicks, who exceed all the rest of the nominal Indian Christians together,

'Of the priests,' he declares, 'it may truly be said, that they are in general better acquainted with the Veda or Brama than with the Gospel of Christ. In some places the doctrines of both are blended. At Aughoor, situated between Tritchinoply and Madura,' he 'witnessed (in October 1806) the tower of Juggernaut employed to solemnize a Christian festival.'—Of the Christians under the care of the Danish mission who were visited in the Tinavelly district in 1806, Brown, quoting the Missionary Transactions, says, (ii. 436.) 'they were extremely ignorant and could be considered as Christians only in name. In one place, none of the congregation could answer the simple question, what must you do to be saved. In another town, about three hundred people desired Mr. Ringeltaube to baptize them, but when asked the reason, they could not tell. 'For the good of my soul,' the best instructed of them replied, but here their knowledge ended. On another occasion, a person gave the following answer, 'Formerly, I paid ten panchukeram to government; this year the collector demands twelve; therefore I desire to become a Christian.' Again it is said of the same gentleman; 'As Mr. Ringeltaube was still imperfectly acquainted with the language, he was not able to examine the qualifications of the candidates for baptism, and therefore he devolved this important office on two of the catechists, who accordingly baptized between two and three hundred of them. It certainly seems a little strange, that he should have adopted so loose a system with regard to a people, who, by his own account, were so grossly ignorant of the principles of Christianity, and so destitute of every principle of true religion. He appears, indeed, to have reckoned it enough if the candidates for baptism were able to repeat the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the words concerning the institution of the two Sacraments.' And again; 'In November 1810, the number whom he had baptized amounted to four hundred and twenty-two; but we fear that most of them have little or nothing of Christianity about them. The chief object which many of them appear to have had in view, in becoming Christians was an expectation that they would then be exempted from the publick burdens.' Nor are even the Baptist converts wholly to be depended on. 'The Baptist Missionaries,' says Brown (ii. 170.) quoting the Periodical Accounts, 'found it extremely difficult to form a just estimate of the professions of such as became inquirers about the Gospel. Among the Hindoos, the hope of being employed in some work, or recommended to some other person, or even of getting only a few cowries, is sufficient to induce a man in easy circumstances to carry on a deception of this kind for a year or two together, with the utmost servility

imaginable;' and of one of the native missionaries it is said on the same authority, 'the number of persons, whom he baptized, was very considerable; but we cannot help expressing our fears lest he, as well as some others, particularly of those raised up in India, should admit the natives to baptism on too slight evidences of their Christianity.'

Whatever difference of opinion in short may exist respecting the cause, we suppose no one will question the fact, that missionary efforts have made no extensive impression upon the vast population of Hindostan. This cannot be wholly ascribed to want of pecuniary means. There is no charity so popular as foreign missions. Four years ago, the aggregate amount of receipts of four English societies in one year was more than half a million of dollars, and the single American society of which we have spoken has not uncommonly received $4000; in some instances 5000, 6000, and 7000; and, in one, more than 8000 in a month, besides a great uncomputed amount of other property. Nor is the failure to be ascribed to incompetency in the agents. Few men have lived better qualified for such an enterprize,—we were about to say for any great enterprize,—than some of the Catholic, Lutheran and Baptist missionaries in Asia. Of our countrymen we cannot indeed say the same; because, without meaning any disrespect to them, we must confess ourselves not aware that they have given evidence of peculiar fitness for an office, which will find uses for every high trait of moral and intellectual character, and every accomplishment of education. And their own reports betray their singular deficiency in that discreet regard to places, persons, and occasions, which so distinguished the great missionary Paul, and to reject which is to make sure of marring one's endeavours. 'Our daily custom,' they say, 'of addressing the people wherever we find them, we consider our most important business;' more important than that of teaching youth, or circulating books. Their inference one would expect would have been, that they ought to gain the good will, confidence, and favourable hearing of as many as possible, and then avail themselves, with as much kindness and address as zeal, of opportunities to declare and recommend their message. But it is no way to obtain either good-will, respect, or attention, to place one's self in such situations as one of them describes in the following extracts. 'In five or six places, where a few individuals were together, I attempted in vain to address them with the words of life. In another place they were strangers who had probably heard of me. I had scarcely finished an affectionate salutation, when without answering a word, they all arose and departed. I met with very few during the day who

attended with any considerable interest. The weaver too told me to day that he had made up his mind to know no other god, than those he had known before. I warned him according to my ability as a solemn close to what I had said previously, while a female of the family deridingly said 'talk no more, he will cry.' 'I warned them and the spectators as much as I could, amid their noise, which they seemed greatly to increase, hoping to drown my voice, and induce me to withdraw.' If an occurrence of such a nature had been reported to us, we should have supposed that it was an unfortunate accident, occasioned by a zeal which for the moment prevented a proper self-government; and that the missionaries would take care to compensate for the injury it must have done, by a more courteous and judicious course in future. But when, from its appearance in a formal report without any such intimation, we are led to suppose that it was not inconsistent with their deliberately adopted *modus operandi*, it certainly seems to us to betray the want of a very important qualification for their work.

But the cause of the disappointment of missionary endeavours we conceive to lie deeper than in any want of support for the undertaking, or of abilities in the agents. And we feel deeply concerned to trace it. We have no sympathy with any who should speak lightly of foreign missions. The conversion of the whole world to the truth as it is in Jesus we see to be the noblest object of Christian benevolence, and there is no anticipation which has equal power over our imaginations and our hearts. When a band of missionaries leave the country of their birth and attachments for that of their unpromising labours, we suppose our feelings are as awake to the interest of the occasion, as those of many who have more flattering hopes of their success. But our predominant feeling is that of regret that they do not carry a purer Gospel.

We apprehend that there exists an insurmountable obstacle to the success of missionary operations in India, in the character of the systems which have been offered to supplant the old idolatry. The Catholics have succeeded much better than the orthodox protestants; but the obstacles to the success of both are similar, and the orthodox protestants therefore we apprehend will fail as the Catholics failed before them. The Hindoo religion is a religion of mystery and imagination. When overthrown, it will not be by another faith of the same character, but by a faith founded upon evidence, and not opposed to reason. Pure and not orthodox Christianity is the system which will evangelize India. Much piety no doubt exists in Christian countries along with an impure faith, but it is not on the extension of an

impure faith that divine providence will most propitiously smile, and that which cannot be defended upon sound principles of evidence is incapable of gaining the assent of men when strong interests oppose it. There is moreover an intrinsick difficulty in offering a Hindoo any reason for rejecting the 330,000.000 Gods of his own mythology, and acknowledging the three (as far as he can see) of the christian. Between the worship of one God, and of more than one, the difference is specifick, and he can perceive it. But he cannot perceive the force of an argument against polytheism, from one who urges upon him the faith of a God in three persons. Again; he is as firm a believer, he will say, in fatalism, as any one who would enforce on him the Calvinistic tenet of the divine irrespective decrees. 'This idea of fatality' says Winslow, speaking of the belief of the Hindoos in that doctrine, "extends to a future life. When asked, 'do you hope to go to Heaven,' one will answer 'if God hath written it in my fate, I shall go to Heaven; if not, I shall go to hell.' This is orthodoxy, if the Westminster divines have expounded it aright; and with a Hindoo who should answer thus, what would remain to be learned respecting the doctrine of predestination?

It is one of the weighty reasons why we wish and pray that the various systems of orthodoxy may be supplanted by a purer faith, that they present the great obstacle to the diffusion of Christianity over the world. A Hindoo has a ready answer,—we do not say a sound one, though we think it, for on this opinions differ,—but he has a ready and plausible answer to the orthodox missionaries; the answer, viz. that their own system is not free from such objections as they urge to his. They charge him with being a polytheist. You too, he replies, worship three Gods, for aught you can make me understand. These are, they rejoin, the same essence in three persons. A similar view, he returns, of the unity of the Godhead in different manifestations is taken by wise men of my own nation, but I find it is a feeble preservative against polytheism, for the multitude do not understand such distinctions. They charge him with doing away the sense of accountableness by entertaining the belief that his fate in eternity was fixed before he was born. I find the same doctrine, he will say, in your tracts and sermons, and there it is called election and reprobation.—How vain and mischievous, they will proceed, to suppose that washing in the Ganges, or any thing else external to the man, will be a substitute with the Deity for moral purity. And yet, he will say, do you not yourselves maintain that the sacrifice of your second God,—the only means of saving any from the wrath of the first—saved them, independently of any reforming influence on their own minds, by discharging the debt which their sins had contracted?

While the remonstrances of orthodox missionaries against the corrupt theology of the Brahmins are thus capable of being retorted, we do not see that their prospects can fail to be discouraging. It is in vain to show the Hindoos that they ought to reject their opinions, because incapable of being established by evidence, when they are able to hold the same argument concerning those which are offered them instead. Our views, they will allow, seem self-contradictory, but this is because they are mysterious; and they are above reason, but they are not therefore inoperative speculations, for they strongly occupy our fancies. To show us then that no argument will sustain them is not to compel us to abandon them, for the same is evident concerning the system which yourselves adopt, and propose to us as a substitute. If we are to abandon our system because it is opposed to common sense and incapable of being sustained by proof, it must be in favour of another of an opposite character. When you offer us such an one, it will be time to consider its claims.

It is only the errors which ignorance and false philosophy have appended to the pure and reasonable religion of the Gospel, to which such remarks would apply. The faith which Jesus Christ and his apostles preached is liable to none of them. It revealed truths of infinite worth which reason was unable and had failed to discover; but not a doctrine did it comprise which reason rejects, or which the name of mystery must be employed to protect from the investigation that would expose it. And it is therefore that we long to have pure Christianity preached in India, that it may have free course, and be glorified. The orthodox missionaries have made little progress with their mysteries, because that ground was already occupied. That the pure system would not meet with much opposition is more than we expect, but we are sure that it has, and that orthodoxy has not, that characteristic which will make the obstacles to be not insuperable. It is capable of being enforced upon satisfactory testimony. The Hindoos are in bondage to a miserable superstition. But they are not the imbecile and ignorant people they have been described. Many of them are inquisitive and thinking men. Their minds are possessed by many idle and mischievous fancies, but still they are able to apprehend the force of argument. They are withheld by many prejudices and interests from the reception of Christian truth. Still they are capable of being convinced and persuaded. What can be shown them to be true, they must, like other men, at length receive; and what can be proved to them to be right, they will at length own that they ought to do. This cannot be proved to them concerning

the doctrines of Augustin and Calvin, but it may be concerning the doctrines of uncorrupt Christianity.*

If we may judge without presumption of the indications of providence, a brighter day is dawning upon India. Late events seem to tend to a happy consummation. At least, the experiment, to which we look for a different result from what yet has been witnessed, appears about to be tried under favourable auspices. The sacred volume, to which we shall need to appeal for the proof of our faith, has been widely circulated by the active labours of those, who, as we think, have counteracted their own laborious efforts by their erroneous expositions of its contents. But, though they have failed to reap the harvest, they have bountifully scattered the seed. They have made the scriptures of truth accessible to those whom they are destined at length to enlighten, and thus have supplied all that was wanting except well qualified interpreters.

What till very lately was wanting, we have reason to hope is beginning to be furnished. At this most favourable period since India was known for introducing pure Christianity into it, when the religion of their conquerors has engaged extensively the attention and curiosity of that people, and when the scriptures are provided in their own language for all who can be persuaded to appeal 'to the law and to the testimony,' a competent individual embraces the pure doctrine of the Gospel in a situation and under circumstances for offering it to the heathen under many advantages, and is to be made, we trust, in some measure an instrument of that happy event to which we look.

Mr. Adam, the author of the sermon, of which we have prefixed the title to this article, was not indeed the first who had preached the simple doctrines of our religion in Hindostan. 'The most discerning of the Hindoos themselves who have read the Bible,' says Brown, 'say that the Romish religion, is an abuse of the christian name.' It is probable that other forms of orthodoxy appeared to many of them in much the same light.

* 'The Missionaries' says a correspondent of the Christian Reformer, who had been long resident in India 'have ever found the doctrine of the Trinity and the assertion that Christ is God, a stumbling block in their way. The Chinese tell them they see no use in insisting on a new set of gods being introduced in the place of their old ones. The Mohammedans accuse them of blasphemy in making a created man, although a great and blessed prophet, equal with God, and they accuse them of having falsified the original scripture, and of acting in direct opposition to the preaching of our Saviour, who says, pray to God alone. Unitarian Missionaries would meet with less opposition than those of any other sect, as all appear ready to admit of one great, one sole cause, one God supreme.' 'I have paid some attention to the subject, and from China to the extent of our Eastern possessions, I have found the aforementioned reasons the only ones of any consequence urged against the Christian religion.'

They so appeared at least, to one obscure, but sensible and virtuous native, William Roberts of Madras, who has collected about him an increasing society of believers, as undistinguished as himself, in 'the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent.' 'There is not,' says this simple hearted neophyte, 'one European or European descendent among us, not one rich man, not one learned man, even not one that can read English well.' Yet they have now two schools under their direction, and writes expositions of scripture, and makes translations from English books, which are circulated among them in manuscript. His is, however, a light under a bushel. He is old and infirm; without rank, education, or resources; and his labours are not so much encouraging on account of any great results to be expected from them, as on account of the indication they give that the soil will yield a rich harvest to a skilful culture, when thus it shoots up in a corner, a spontaneous, though a scanty growth.

The following extract from a letter of Mr. Adam to the secretary of the English Unitarian Fund, dated Calcutta, Jan. 28th 1822, explains the circumstances under which that gentleman is before the religious publick.

'I left England as a Missionary under the patronage of the Baptist Society, in the year 1817, and since then have continued to reside in this city. The difficulties I experienced in my labours amongst the natives, on the subject of the Trinity, gradually, although slowly, matured into a conviction that it was contrary both to scripture and reason, and this conviction compelled me to an open renunciation of it and profession of Unitarianism. I have, in consequence, within a few months past, been excommunicated from the religious Society to which I belonged, and with the assistance of a few friends have rented a house in which Christian worship is regularly conducted. This, together with a late publication of Rammohun Roy's, whom I am happy to number amongst the very warmest supporters of our cause, has excited much opposition amongst the Trinitarian denominations, Churchmen, Independents and Baptists; and the immediate object which I have in view, in this communication, is to secure that cooperation with Unitarians in England, which is necessary to give efficacy and permanency to our efforts in this country, and which, I believe, it is one object of the Unitarian Fund Society to afford. I am wholly ignorant of the numbers and actual state of Unitarians in England, and of the character which they possess as a denomination, having received all my impressions on these subjects from the writings of their adversaries. I am, therefore, wholly unable to judge whether a proposal to form a Unitarian Foreign Missionary Society on a scale to embrace the

whole denomination in England, Scotland and Ireland, will meet with your approbation, or the attempt with ultimate success. I know that Trinitarians in general represent their opponents as destitute of that deep feeling of the value of true religion, by which some of themselves have been induced to visit foreign and distant countries with a view to communicate to the Heathen a knowledge of the gospel. This, after all, is a merit which they cannot claim universally, for they are not all missionaries; nor can they they claim it exclusively, without forgetting the numerous navigators and travellers who, on purely worldly principles and motives, have dared every difficulty and danger without shrinking. As for myself, I can say, that since I embraced Unitarianism, while I am thankful to my Father in heaven for so enlightening my mind as to perceive the errors of opinion which I formerly entertained, and so strengthening my religious principle as to enable me to avow my convictions, I, at the same time, feel an equally sincere and earnest desire to be instrumental in making known to my fellow-creatures, and especially to the Heathen, the glorious gospel of the blessed God—a desire which is abundantly confirmed when I consider that there are so many of 'my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh,' whom I love and esteem and revere as pious Christians, but who, in principle at least, approach so near to the Heathen.

In a letter to Dr. Channing about the same time Mr. Adam says, 'I came to India, as a Missionary from the Baptist Society in England. About three years and a half after my arrival in this country, that is, about five or six months ago, the convictions of my mind rendered it necessary for me to renounce Trinitarianism. I found, from that intercourse with the natives which I constantly cultivated, that on the ground of reason, (the only ground which it is possible to assume in propagating any religion,) I could no better maintain a three fold distinction in the divine nature, than the Hindoos could a distinction of many millions. You will not suppose from this, that when a Trinitarian, I made the trinity a frequent subject of discussion with the natives. On the contrary, I, like others, avoided it as much as possible; but when they brought it forward as an objection, or endeavoured to draw a parallelism on this ground, between their own system and ours, I was compelled to meet the attack. With the assistance of friends, a house has been rented, in which I preach every Sunday, to a small congregation of Europeans, country born, and natives who understand English. The principal of these last, is Rammohun Roy, of whom you have no doubt heard, and whose writings you perhaps have seen. One of his late publications will accompany this, together with a few copies of a sermon which

I lately published. I have in view, to commence a periodical work, which will include both a selection from European and American theological publications, as well as original communications from friends and supporters in this country.'

In Aug. 1822, the same gentleman wrote to a friend of ours; 'Sincere as I am in the belief of divine revelation, and desirous of universally extending its benign influence, I would rejoice at nothing more than to see respectable and learned Hindoos and Mussulmen fearlessly standing forth to impugn the *genuine* doctrines of the gospel. In that case, missionaries, instead of wasting their time, talents, and money, in unprofitable schemes, both great and little, in order to substitute for Hindooism and Islamism, the name, without the power, of godliness, would have an opportunity of proving their religion to be established by the most direct and convincing evidence; to contain the most sublime and important truths; to unfold the most certain and ennobling hopes; and thereby to evince that it is indeed a faithful saying and worthy of universal acceptation.—The consequence would be, no doubt, a powerful impression in favour of christianity. Such ever will be the consequence, both among Europeans, and Asiatics, of free public inquiry into the doctrines of the gospel.

'Since you left Calcutta I have been excommunicated from the Circular Road Church, for professing that Jesus Christ was nothing more than the son of God. This drove me into an open avowal of Unitarianism. I commenced public worship, which I still continue, and have opened subscriptions for building a chapel. I am supported both by respectable Europeans and natives.

'We have also commenced a school in which about fifty native boys are instructed in English, *gratis*. Divine revelation, in all its parts, is more and more become my darling study; and I am firmly convinced that Unitarianism is the doctrine of the gospel.' '*Christian* Unitarianism I esteem the pearl of great price; and it is that alone that can become an universal religion. Whatever differences of religious opinion may arise, however, it is still my first and most earnest desire to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Holiness is the great end of all religion; and wherever I see that, I am convinced there can be no fatal, although there may be hurtful errors.'

Mr. Adam is represented as a prudent, well educated and pious man, and since his change of sentiment has been acknowledged even by one of his former coadjutors to be in his view, 'as pious and as sincere as at any former period of their acquaintance.' His sermon before us, and his preface to that of Dr.

Channing, which he has reprinted, give us highly favourable impressions of the talent and temper which he brings to his glorious work. The sermon is from John xx. 31, and is chiefly an exposition of the meaning of that text. It does not show, what indeed there was no reason to expect, much acquaintance with the Unitarian controversy, or with the rules of biblical interpretation; but it is well written, and evidently from a heart warm with the subject. The following extract is a favourable specimen of the manner of reasoning.

'Others assuming the existence of Jesus before he came into the world, and that this title is descriptive of his pre-existent nature, consider it as expressing his true and proper Deity. The general reception which this interpretation has met with, and the confidence with which it is urged, would seem to intimate that it possesses a clearer evidence and a more convincing force, than, on examination, we are able to ascribe to it. For, in the first place it is opposed to the very nature of things, by which the Son never can be the same identical being as the Father. If it is objected that this may be true of the nature of man, but cannot be true of the nature of God, we must then remember that John was a man, writing to men, in the language of men, with a view to convince and persuade men, and that it is utterly inconsistent with the very definition of a *revelation* to suppose that an inspired writer to describe the nature of God should employ terms which are opposed to every form of speech current amongst men. If it should be contended that there is no opposition to the ordinary usage of language, but that the Son, as a Son, is God in a true and proper sense, then, as this usage of language is founded upon the nature of things, and the nature of things is opposed to every idea of an identity of person between a Father and his Son, it is evident, that the unity of the Divine Being—a doctrine equally dear to both sides—is irrecoverably lost. The same important doctrine is injured by an argument not unfrequently adduced, viz. that as the son of Man is man, so the Son of God is God, and therefore Jesus Christ is God. A more correct mode of stating the analogy would be this—that as the Son of man is *a* man, so the Son of God is *a* God, and therefore Jesus Christ is *a* God, one of two, one of three, or one of many, as may be. Instead of thus multiplying the Deity, let it be remembered that the term "God" is not like that of "man" a common name including many individuals under it, but a proper name belonging to, and describing only a single individual who has no identity of nature or of person, with any other individual in universal existence. Leaving several arguments which might be adduced against this interpretation, I mention only one other. If there is one idea which the expression "Son of God" conveys more directly than any other, it is that of derivation, and indeed this idea, as applicable to the original nature of Christ, is commonly admitted and even dwelt upon. But who, as the pious Watts exclaims some-

where in his works, who can for a moment admit the idea of a derived Deity?'

The letter to the secretary of the English Unitarian Fund which we have quoted above, urges the importance of missions in India, and proposes a system of extensive operations. We extract a few passages which throw light upon the interesting inquiry in what manner the Hindoo population is to be addressed.

'The conquered naturally view with great respect all who belong to the cast of the conquerors, especially if the latter possess learning, and I, perhaps, may say piety, as they are by no means blind to the excellencies and defects of those who bear the Christian name. I have reason to suppose that they even exercise a very strict scrutiny over those who profess to teach them a religion better than their own; and the fact that they have discovered, or suppose that they have discovered, much that is selfish and worldly in the conduct of such, has operated powerfully against the propagation of the gospel. On the other hand, if Christians of sound learning and rational piety, unfettered by worldly pursuits, and independent of pecuniary assistance from those to whom they are sent, engage in Missionary labours in this country, they will command the respect of their bitterest native antagonists, and may be eminently useful in spreading the knowledge of the gospel.'

'There is a large majority of Idolaters, and a small but increasing minority of Theists. With respect to the former, a Trinitarian missionary is placed in inextricable difficulties which a Unitarian cannot feel, for after having convinced them of the absurdity of Idolatry, he is obliged to refute himself by teaching them the Supreme Deity of Jesus Christ. The same arguments which he employs against the Idolaters, they may employ against him. Those whom I denominate Theists are the followers of the Vedant system of philosophy, and are in fact Unitarian Hindoos. This system has been of late revived in Bengal with considerable success, through the exertions of Rammohun Roy, and those who have embraced it form a small but highly respectable portion of the Hindoo community. From them the Trinitarian missionary experiences much greater difficulty than from their idolatrous countrymen, for here it is not as in the former case, one error struggling with another, but error contending against truth. The Unitarian Hindoo possesses a vantage ground, from which the Trinitarian Christian never can dislodge him. Yet in them we have a proof that the doctrine of the Divine Unity alone does not humble the mind, restrain the passions, and reform the life, for no one is more deeply impressed with the necessity

of giving them the light of Christianity than Rammohun Roy, who has had the best opportunities of knowing the effect which their conversion from Idolatry to Unitarian Hindooism has produced.'

'With respect to those who shall be employed as Missionaries, they should not only be pious, which is of course indispensable, but, if possible, well versed in literature, both sacred and profane. It has too frequently happened, that persons have come to this country as Missionaries, who have no other recommendation or qualification but their piety; and the injury which is thus done to the Christian cause is incalculable. How great must the injury be, when instead of teaching others, they need themselves to be taught the first principles of the oracles of God, and when, instead of being superior, or at least equal, they are far inferior in a knowledge of the principles of reasoning and in a general acquaintance with science, to most of those amongst whom they are called to labour.'

The statements which have occurred in the course of these remarks justify us in the inference, that, little success as has yet attended missionary attempts in India, it affords no ground for despondence concerning the religious prospects of that fruitful, populous and opulent empire. Christianity has been rejected; but not when presented in a form in which it is capable of being sustained by satisfactory evidence; and this will be the only method of introducing it among Hindoos, for their fancies and feelings are already engaged with mysteries of their own. There is no proof that pure Christianity, stript of its Greek and Gothick embellishments, would be thus rejected, for the experiment has not yet been tried. And there are many appearances to encourage an opposite opinion. The inhabitants of a Christian country may from the force of education, or of some constitutional or accidental bias, sincerely adopt some corrupt form of Christianity in which it is incapable of being shown to be true; and this the Hindoos certainly will not in great numbers, because their tendencies of this nature lead them, in common circumstances, a different way; but the decisive evidence on which Christianity rests, when not counteracted by incredible dogmas attributed to the system itself, is capable of operating with as convincing force upon an Indian as upon a European understanding. Pure Christianity, supported by its proper evidence, forces a fair mind to receive it; and it is capable even of convincing minds strongly prejudiced against it. It has, to say the least, no such powerful and general prejudice to encounter among the better part of the Hindoos, as to cause their reception of it, when favourably presented to them, to be regarded

as a wholly improbable event. There are among them great numbers capable of estimating the worth of solid arguments. The scriptures have already to some extent diffused, and are now rapidly diffusing among them, the information, which provides a basis and materials for such argument; and, if Christendom were faithful to its duty, we see nothing to forbid the hope, that, before this generation should pass away, millions of tongues in India should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.—Entertaining these views, we have not heard with indifference of the conversion of Mr. Adam from the erroneous faith, which he could not have propagated, to the pure one, which we trust he will; and we know not that there is any individual to whose labours we look with a more lively interest.

INTELLIGENCE.

THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL AT CAMBRIDGE.

The public examination (or exhibition, perhaps, it would more properly be called) of the students belonging to the Theological School at Cambridge, took place in the University chapel on Tuesday. The exercises commenced at nine o'clock, and closed at two o'clock P. M. The performances were generally of a high character, and did much honour to the young gentlemen, and to the Institution. The number of dissertations was *twelve;* and the depth and faithfulness of research, the soundness of views, and the modesty and good taste which they manifested, gave pleasing evidence of the great advantages enjoyed at this Institution for acquiring theological knowledge. The greatest circumstance of regret is, that the funds for the support of indigent students are not greater;—that those who are pursuing their studies here might devote themselves exclusively and without embarrassment to the object before them,—and that those whose want of funds induces them to place themselves under the patronage of other institutions, might not be deterred by any motives of this nature, from resorting for their education to this distinguished "School of the Prophets."

This is the second year on which the examination has been public. The number of ladies and other auditors was greater on this occasion than it was last year; but it was much less than it should be, considering the importance of the occasion. It has been suggested, that the circumstance, that it is called an *Examination*, operates as a hindrance of many who would otherwise

attend—on the ground, either that the performances are supposed to be dull and uninteresting, or that they are designed only for the literati. It ought to be known that these performances are intended for the public, and that they are of a character highly interesting and instructive.—We trust that nothing is necessary in order to excite a proper interest in these performances, in the public mind, but merely to make known their interesting character, and that they are intended for the benefit and gratification of the public, as well as for the improvement of those who exhibit.

The following is a list of the subjects of the different dissertations, and of the names of those who performed.

JUNIOR CLASS.

1. The evidence of the existence of the writings of the New Testament in the first century. *Samuel Presbury.*
2. The support which Christianity derives from the martyrdom of the early Christians. *Nathaniel Gage.*

MIDDLE CLASS.

3. The character of the common version of the New Testament. *Alexander Young.*
4. The necessary ambiguity of language. *Charles W. Upham.*
5. The grounds of union among different sects of Christians. *Edward B. Hall.*
6. The errors of the early Christians in the interpretation of Scripture. *Eliphalet P. Crafts.*

SENIOR CLASS.

7. The objection to the goodness of God, drawn from the existence of evil, natural and moral. *Calvin Lincoln.*
8. James v. 16: "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." *Benjamin Kent.*
9. The importance of the obligation of positive institutions in religion. *Benjamin Hersey.*
10. The means of a general revival of practical religion. *Ezra S. Gannett.*
11. The value of Revelation, though nothing more be taught by it than is maintained by Unitarian Christians. *Wm. H. Furness.*
12. John i. 29: "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." *William Farmer.*

Christian Register, Aug. 15, 1822.

American Bible Society.—This society held its annual meeting at the city Hotel, in New York, on the 8th day of May last. In the absence of Judge Jay, General Clarkson presided. The annual Report was read and accepted; votes of thanks were passed to the officers and auxiliaries of the society, and to benevolent individuals who had contributed towards the erection of a building for its use; and a resolution was adopted to use all means in the society's power to introduce the scriptures into various parts of South America. We extract from the report some of the most interesting articles of information.

'The Depository of the Society has been completed. The corner stone was laid shortly after the last anniversary; and the building was finished in the early part of the winter. The expenditure for this object, including the ground, has been about $22,500. Between 8000 and 9000 dollars were obtained from liberal and benevolent individuals, for the express purpose of paying for the Depository; and the remainder of the sum, has been *temporarily* supplied out of the general funds of the Society.'

'There have been printed, at the Depository of the American Bible Society, during the seventh year,

Bibles	23,500
New Testaments, in English	21,500
in Spanish	7,000
There have been purchased, German Bibles	1,100
There have been received from the British and Foreign Bible Society, Spanish Bibles	500
There have been printed by the Kentucky Bible Society, from the stereotype plates belonging to the American Bible Society, besides the edition of 2000, mentioned in the third report, Bibles	2,000
Which added to the number mentioned in the last report	268,177

Make a total of THREE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THREE THOUSAND, SEVEN HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SEVEN Bibles and Testaments, or parts of the latter, printed from the stereotype plates of the Society in New-York, and at Lexington, Kentucky, or otherwise obtained for circulation, during the seven years of its existence.

There have been issued from the Depository, from the 30th of April, 1822, to the first of May, 1823,

Bibles	28,448
Testaments	26,357
	54,805

In the six preceding years, there were issued,

Bibles and Testaments . . .	192,926	
Epistles of John, in Delaware . .	751	
Gospel of John, in Mohawk . .	141	
		193,818

Making a total of Two Hundred and Forty-eight Thousand, Six Hundred and Twenty-three Bibles and Testaments and parts of the New Testament, issued by the American Bible Society since its establishment.'

'The Managers have granted one thousand dollars to the Rev. Dr. Carey and his associates, at Serampore, to be applied by them towards defraying the expense of translating and printing the Scriptures in the various languages of India. Another grant, of five hundred dollars, has been made to the Missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, in the Island of Ceylon, to be employed by them in the purchase of Scriptures in the Tamul language, for distribution in that Island.

'The first of these donations in money was made in consequence of a memorial from the Rev. Dr. Carey and his associates, soliciting assistance from the American Bible Society. It appeared that they had published, at the date of their memorial, the whole Bible in five of the languages of India, and the New Testament and parts of the Old, in ten more; that in six more, the New Testament was brought more than half through the press; and that in the remaining ten, some one of the Gospels was printed, and, in several, all four of the Gospels. It also appeared, that, of the New Testament, in the five languages in which the Scriptures are most read in India, the Sunskrit, Bengalee, Hindee, Mahratta, and Orissa, and of the Old Testament in the first two of these languages, the editions heretofore published were exhausted, and the demand continued to be very great and urgent.'

The Society has distributed gratuitously, during its seventh year 12,923 Bibles and Testaments, valued at $7592,24. Its receipts have amounted to $46.521 75, of which sum $20,642 70 was in payment for Bibles. The whole number of auxiliary societies has been increased to 360.

Massachusetts Bible Society.—The fifteenth anniversary of this society was on the 5th of June last. It distributed during the year 2776 Bibles and Testaments, making 31,859 which it has circulated since its institution. Its receipts during the year were $1564 91, and its expenditure $1959 79. The Executive Committee remark that 'the operations of a society situated like this, are necessarily circumscribed, and present nothing to attract

admiration. They are silent and uniform, but not imposing. They do good quietly and in secret, but there is nothing in them deserving the attention of the public, except that they distribute the Holy Word of God; and this they do in common with hundreds of other similar institutions, in every part of the country. It is privilege enough for us, that we are permitted to do our part, humble as it may be. And it ought to be remembered that although we bear the name of the state, yet the necessities of the state are in small measure supplied by our means. Every county has its own Bible Society, and the capital is the seat of two besides our own. In consequence of this, it is evident that our operations are necessarily limited. The good work being divided among many, each must be content to labour in its allotted sphere, without the opportunity or expectation of magnificent exertion or wide celebrity. This multiplication of societies is a subject of congratulation, because in this way every portion of the country may be more effectually supplied. The land is better watered by frequent springs, than by one mighty river, though this would be a far sublimer object.'

American Colonization Society.—The Board of Managers of this society still complain of the discouragement which they experience in their benevolent design for want of pecuniary resources. They have issued proposals for publishing in Washington 'a Periodical work, which shall furnish the public with accurate information concerning the plans and prospects of their Institution; give a minute account of its operations, and of the condition and progress of the Colony; communicate any new and interesting intelligence which may be received, relating to the Geography, Natural History, Manners and Customs, of Africa; and admit into its pages such essays as may be thought calculated to advance the interests of the Colony, or the cause of African improvement, as well as select passages from authors who have already written on this subject; and important extracts from the Reports of such foreign associations as are making exertions to suppress the Slave-Trade, or relieve the African race.'

The last intelligence from their colonists is contained in a letter from Capt. Wightman to the editor of the Advertiser, from which the following is an extract.

'The brig Oswego arrived on the coast of Africa in May last, and landed her passengers sent out by the American Colonization Society, 61 in number, at Cape Montserado on the 25th of that month, all in health. These people immediately proceeded to the business of cutting timber, and preparing to build

houses; but in about ten days were all taken sick with the African fever. The other inhabitants of the colony were all in health except several who had been wounded, and Mr. Ashmun, whose health was improving. The tower, or castle, built by Capt. Spence and his men, had suffered considerable injury by the heavy rains, in consequence of the roof not being raised before the rains came on. A breach was made in the wall of about 12 feet, which is probably repaired. It has been stated heretofore that there is at Cape Montserado a good harbour. This is incorrect. There is, properly speaking, no harbour there. There can be none. Vessels must lie off from the pitch of the cape one mile, bring it to bear S. S. W. and unload by means of boats—The wind is invariably during the rainy season at S. W. There is a bar at the mouth of the river, over which boats only can pass. For an agricultural colony, that spot selected and occupied by the colonization society is, I think, an excellent one. The land lies high; always open to the sea breezes, and the soil is luxuriantly fertile. It will perhaps be healthy for blacks; but such as go out from America will always undergo a seasoning by sickness, especially if they arrive in the rainy season.

Since the attack and defeat of the natives, there has been a good understanding between them and the colony. With a fortification, and a few light cannon, nothing is to be feared from the natives. They have great respect for Dr. Ayres; and, on his arrival, sent their messages to inform him of their design to make him a friendly visit.'

United Domestic Missionary Society. The following extracts from a report read to this society at its first annual meeting, in the city of New York, on the 9th of May last, show that it adopts the same judicious plan of operations of which the example has been set by the Evangelical Missionary Society of Massachusetts.

'The plan adopted by the committee of aiding churches and congregations in the settlement and support of ministers, in preference to the method of itineracy so generally pursued by missionary societies, is deemed of such importance as to justify particular notice on this occasion. The instances are very numerous, of places, hitherto without settled pastors, where the population, by the transient and injudicious labours of itinerants of different denominations, has been divided into several sects, neither of which alone, is able to support a minister; but where, with the prospect of a settled pastor of piety, education, and talents, enough are willing to unite to provide a considerable part of the requisite support, if the balance can for a time be furnish-

ed by a Missionary Society. In these cases, even where the population is very considerable in numbers, and where the interests of morality and religion most urgently require the constant labours of an able and faithful minister, there is no prospect of their obtaining and settling one without the encouragement and aid proposed in this plan. In general, their condition in this respect grows less and less promising by the lapse of time, and instead of being bettered, is undoubtedly rendered worse by the occasional visits of the various descriptions of travelling preachers, authorized and unauthorized, with which the country abounds.'

'The number of destitute places, however, where the people are willing to unite and make an exertion to support a minister, if encouraged and aided for a time by the society, is still greater than can at present be supplied with men qualified by their education and piety to occupy them. And since there is no rational hope of ministers being settled in those places unless this plan shall be pursued, it appears to the committee to be their obvious duty, enforced by every consideration of immediate and permanent good, to persist in the course they have adopted. Upon this plan the number of destitute places will be gradually diminished. The people once brought together, and possessed of the blessings of public worship, and the constant labours of a gospel minister, will by their own exertions supersede the necessity of missionary aid. The example of one place will be followed by another. Every point that is gained will facilitate new acquisitions; and the places assisted by the society in the establishment of the gospel will in due time help to extend the same favour to other localities.'

General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. This body met in Philadelphia, on the 15th of May last. Among the delegations appointed by it to different ecclesiastical bodies, we find one of Rev. Messrs. Smith and Hanford, to the *General Association of Massachusetts*, from the secretary of which a letter was received and read, communicating the following vote of that Association.

'The Rev. Dr. Rice, having presented the Association, in behalf of the General Assembly, a revised edition of the Constitution of that Church,—*Voted*, that while we most sincerely reciprocate the feelings of Christian affection expressed by Dr. Rice, in presenting the Constitution of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, the cordial thanks of this Association be presented to that body for this token of their regard, and that the Secretary communicate this vote to the stated clerk of the Assembly.'

Dr. Aikin's Works.—Miss Aikin is preparing a memoir of her father, the late John Aikin M. D., together with a selection of such of his critical Essays and Miscellaneous pieces as have not been before printed in a collected form. *Monthly Repository, No.* 207.

London Charities.—' It is with pride, gratitude, and pleasure, that we are enabled to present to our readers, the following Statement of the Receipts during the last year, of some of these most valuable, most virtuous, and sacred institutions :—

	£.	s.	d.
Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge,	53,729	9	3
Society for Promoting the Gospel in Foreign parts,	19,513	11	0
British and Foreign Bible Society,	103,802	17	1
British and Foreign School Society, about	1,600	0	0
Church Missionary Society,	32,975	9	7
Wesleyan ditto	26,883	5	5
London ditto	29,437	13	4
Moravian ditto	7,192	18	5
Naval and Military Bible Society	2,046	4	2
Society for Conversion of the Jews	10 689	13	9
Hibernian Society	5,372	5	6
Religious Tract Society	9,261	3	0
Church of England Tract Society	514	11	10
Society for the relief of Poor Pious Clergymen	2,219	0	5
Continental Society	1,074	12	6
London Female Penitentiary	4,075	19	0
African Institution	1,124	0	0
Sunday School Society for Ireland	3,193	6	6
Hibernian Bible Society	5,679	11	10
Prayer Book and Homily Society	2,056	15	8
Irish Religious Book and Tract Society	3,943	0	0
Sunday School Union Society	1,762	4	5

Bell's Weekly Messenger.

DIED,

In Calcutta, March 27th, after an illness of only one day, the Rev. Wm. Ward, the distinguished associate of Cary and Marshman, in the Baptist Mission and a man deserving to be had in honourable remembrance for his tried disinterestedness and zeal.

TO READERS.

THE publication of this number has been unavoidably delayed by the removal of our publishers to another office.

THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

NEW SERIES—No. 29.

September and October, 1823.

MEANS OF A GENERAL REVIVAL OF PRACTICAL RELIGION.

In looking upon the religion of Jesus Christ, as it is exhibited in his teaching and life, we are not more surprised at the limited extent to which its reception has been confined, than at the practical indifference with which it has been treated by its professed disciples. When we examine it independently of the character of those beings to whom it offers itself, we at once suppose that it will gain their esteem and devotion; that the weight of its motives, and the solemnity of its sanctions will call forth their earnest attention. Yet in all ages of christianity complaints have been heard of the coldness of its professors. Their want of zeal and engagedness in religion has been the theme of reproof with the true servant of God, and with the artful hypocrite. And it might well be so in the ages that followed the establishment of the church, when the simplicity of our holy faith was buried under doctrines and rites which vain philosophy and wanton speculation, ignorance and superstition, ambition and avarice, and every worldly passion had united in heaping in strange confusion upon it. In the ages of darkness, when arts and letters and science were neglected, we might expect that virtue likewise would be forgotten, and when learning fled for refuge to the cells of a monastery, religion would seek an asylum in the vallies of Piedmont. But how is it, that when knowledge is shining in its greatest splendour on the civilized world, and christianity has been recovered from oppression, and brought back to the communion of social life, when its doctrines are so well understood, and its precepts so truly inculcated, that there is still occasion for the exhortations and remonstrances that are directed against the indifference of christians? Why is there so little practical religion among *us*? If we confine the subject to our own

situation, we shall more feel its importance, and be better able to satisfy ourselves in its examination.—By considering the causes of our religious indifference, we shall be enabled to form some idea of its correctives.

1. In the first place, the very constitution of our being and situation in this world has a tendency to make us inattentive to religion. We enter life with capacities which may be strengthened in the cause either of virtue or of vice, with passions which may be made subservient to our progress in moral excellence, or become the ministers of sin, with affections which may be directed to worthy objects, or be perverted to unholy ends. With this mental and moral constitution we are brought into a portion of our existence, whose essential characteristic is, that it is a state in which, under a strict moral discipline, we may be prepared for a more perfect state. Temptations are around us from our first entrance on our earthly being. The mind is constantly exposed to the influence of circumstances which partake of the character of the life to which they belong—they are circumstances of discipline to moral agents. But mankind have not *solely* to prepare for a future existence, they must support themselves in this. They must not only contend with the moral difficulties which lie in their way to perfection, but they have innumerable physical wants which must be answered, they must provide for the necessities of the present state as well as lay up for themselves a treasure in heaven, and this by a merciful disposition of their Creator constitutes part of their moral discipline. But with the necessities come the cares and vexations of this life. Excess and luxury follow close upon the supply of our wants, and then we have continually something which we desire, or something which we must guard. We have too much or we have not enough, and the want and the abundance alike bring demands on our time and our thoughts, and much of each is taken away from religion. As we proceed in life, habits are exerting an increasing influence over us, the passions connected with them are gaining strength, and we become more and more the slaves of this world's concerns. Where our thoughts are, there will our hearts be also; our affections are entwined around the objects of our anxiety and pursuit; our fears and hopes are given to the things of this present time, and our power and our inclination to attend to subjects connected with a future and invisible state are lessening together. This is the natural influence of the circumstances of our being, and in this we may find a powerful cause of inattention to religion operating at all times and upon all men.

2. A circumstance which has a strong tendency to make us indifferent to real, practical religion is our early instruction in

the truths on which it is founded. Education and habit have a great power of hardening the heart and inuring it to view the most solemn subjects without emotion. The youth educated in a christian land becomes acquainted with the existence and truths of the christian faith before his mind is matured. His belief is rendered it, before he perceives the grounds on which it claims to be believed. He also is accustomed to the language of scripture and of seriousness before he knows its true meaning and weight, and admits the truth of statements, of whose extent and application he is ignorant. Thus religion is to him a matter of sound, not of feeling, something to which custom has rendered him indifferent, as we frequently pass by the beautiful in nature with neglect, if it has been familiar to us from our childhood, when the stranger would stop in admiration. The young man among us views the subjects of eternity with little interest, for they are a story often told. As he grows up into manhood, the momentous and affecting truths of religion having lost their novelty, lose their power over him, and he is perhaps a regular attendant on the services of the sanctuary from habit, and an indistinct sense of duty impressed upon his mind in childhood, without receiving any benefit. His faith is historical, not practical. It is a belief of facts, not a principle of action.

3. The first cause of religious indifference which has been mentioned, is of universal application, the second has particular force in this part of our country, where the means of early religious instruction are so generally possessed. There is one other, which peculiarly affects the present period, and which arises from the degree to which theological controversy has prevailed among us for some time. With however good a spirit this controversy may have been conducted, the necessary consequence of it has been to draw the attention of readers in a special degree to the points in dispute, the controverted doctrines of different sects. These doctrines have indeed an important influence upon the affections and conduct, but we are apt in discussion to give them an independent and exclusive weight, and to lose sight of christian character in our pursuit of christian faith. In examining the arguments for particular systems, we forget the grand principles which are common to all, and which are the foundation of morality and piety. The very study of theology as a separate branch of pursuit may have a noxious influence. The revelation which we investigate with the critical spirit of a scholar, becomes too much a mere object of speculation and criticism. While we find fresh proofs of its heavenly origin, we have less of its heavenly temper. It is true that this effect is confined to a small portion of society, the reading class; but when we remember what

an influence they exert over the whole body, how much the tone of moral feeling and the standard of moral action depend upon them, and especially when we consider how directly the clergy, to whom these remarks are especially applicable, are the guardians of religious sentiment and character in the community, we may be ready to acknowledge that theological controversy is immediately prejudicial to practical religion.

There are other circumstances of a more or less general nature, which, in their connexion with those already mentioned, may affect the state of public feeling on religious subjects. Progress in wealth, increase of commerce, and that attention to the elegancies and arts of life which follows, as they occupy a greater portion of our thoughts will detract from the attention bestowed upon more important pursuits. Devotion to literature and science may engross the mind to the exclusion of other things, and political dissensions may fasten the attention on the bickerings and prejudices that are excited by the very blessings of liberty. Preparation for heaven should be the great business of moral beings in a state of probation, and when from local or temporary causes any other subjects occupy their minds so as to drive away this, we must expect a correspondent degeneracy in morals and religion. But we by no means conceive that the present time is *remarkable* among us for its profligacy, or its carelessness with regard to eternal things. However true and lamentable it may be that the religion of Christ has not greater influence over the hearts of its professors, that its spirit is not more apparent in their lives, and that its profession is not more universal, still these are not the peculiar marks of this generation. The generations that have gone before us had their vices, as we have ours, and our pious forefathers while they gave to the character of New-England that religious temperament which has continued to the present day, stamped upon it a stern and uncharitable exterior, as inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel as it was unattractive. With us, religion has lost its sternness, and perhaps something of its strength. Though we would object to those indiscriminate censures which are passed upon the irreligion of modern times, yet there is much occasion for the charge of indifference and worldly mindedness, and much room for a general revival of practical religion. How is this to be effected?

If we listen to the language and practice of a great portion of christians among us, this inquiry seems to be immediately answered. We must produce what are technically called revivals of religion. But we think that such revivals should not be encouraged, for

1. They are not revivals of *practical* religion. The attention

of persons at such times is drawn not so much to the practice as to the profession of christianity. They are treated as disbelievers in the great truths of the gospel, and the object is to awaken them to a sense of the high value of what are supposed to constitute the peculiar doctrines of our holy faith. Hence an acknowledgement of these as of vital importance, and a professed application of them to his own case are all that is required, and all that can be obtained of the sinner thus converted; for there is no opportunity of displaying the influence of christian principles upon the heart or conduct in what are termed times of religious excitement. A state of feeling is produced, the permanence and efficacy of which cannot be tested till the ordinary business of life is resumed, and the exciting causes have ceased. And supposing the doctrines inculcated to be true, from the way in which they are presented, they make men practical christians no more than to state some of the most abstract principles of mathematical science without explaining their application to the affairs of life, would render a person a competent practical mathematician. Observation will show us not only that the essential part of religion, that which relates to well-doing, is comparatively kept out of sight, but that immorality and licentiousness are the frequent attendants upon revivals of religion as they are commonly conducted. They afford a cloak for the hypocrite, a place of action for the artful and designing, opportunity for the corrupt. The excitement which has been produced is unnatural, and cannot continue. The minds of men have been raised to a momentary excess of religious feeling, and when they descend from it, they may pass to indifference or depravity. In the heat of religious excitement the weeds of vice will spring up as readily as better plants. If we visit a town after such a revival has died away, we shall find some who may have been made good christians, and some who have been made hardened sinners. We shall hear of vice which was fostered in these scenes, and we shall discover a spirit of indifference and listlessness generally prevailing, that will form a striking, but not an unaccountable contrast to the past excitement.*

2. These revivals are grounded on false and injurious doctrines. They are false because inconsistent with what we know

* We would not have our remarks on this subject misunderstood. We believe that what are termed revivals of religion are generally pernicious, and that the evils necessarily attending them are sufficient to prove their impropriety. But that they may be the means of awakening an attention to religious subjects, and of producing in some a lasting impression we have no doubt. They are for the most part commenced from pure motives, and a sincere, though a mistaken faith. We think that we can discern the influence of more enlightened views acting upon this subject. The preaching and conduct of recent revivals as far as we have observed, evince the power which more correct modes of thinking in one part of the community necessarily have upon its other portions.

of the intellectual and moral constitution of man. Character is gradually formed, and slowly altered. The whole train of sentiment and feeling on any subject is seldom changed at once. Habits of indolence cannot be overcome in a few days, a love of sinful pleasures cannot be converted into a relish for innocent or holy employments in a few hours—self-command, temperance, sobriety are the effect of persevering endeavours. The understanding that has been darkened by prejudices admits the light slowly; the heart that has been corrupted by vicious inclination requires time and exercise to raise it to a healthful state. The supposition of sudden conversion is not only contradicted by intellectual philosophy; the system of doctrines with which it is associated, we deem contrary to the spirit and teaching of scripture. It is connected with the idea of man's natural depravity, of his inability to recover himself from moral corruption, of the irresistible influence of divine grace, and of the arbitrary imparting of this grace. These views of human nature, and of God's goodness we conceive to be neither taught nor warranted by revelation, and yet these are the statements which are urged upon the subject of modern revivals, and are the ground work and essential support of such revivals. But these doctrines we have said are not merely false, but injurious, highly injurious to morality. If such representations of the character of man, and the government of God were allowed to have their natural influence, unchecked by their connexion with the true and solemn declarations of the bible, they would tend directly to licentiousness and carelessness. The sinner who owes his evil dispositions to his natural constitution and who cannot alter that constitution, has an excuse for every sin, and good reason for continuance in wickedness. His endeavours to reform will be unavailing unless God sees fit to change his heart; and when God does see fit to do this, his opposition will be equally powerless. If, in the purposes of the divine will he is to be saved, his salvation is secure, whatever course of conduct he may pursue; and if he is not to inherit eternal life, it is in vain for him to seek it. Can doctrines more pernicious to the good of society, or of the individual, be imagined? We do not see their full effect, because they are never allowed to act alone on the mind. They are neutralized by the truths to which they are strangely joined—but their pure and legitimate consequences appear to us fatal to practical religion.

3. These objections to ordinary revivals of religion lie against them when managed in the best manner. The evils mentioned do not attend the abuse of what is in itself good, but they belong to the very character, and constitute the life and spirit of such

revivals. It seems then at first view, singular that so much success should accompany the endeavours made in this way, to awaken an attention to religion. We think this success can be explained without supposing the correctness of the means used; and this circumstance is another objection to their exercise. The two great instruments which are directed to this end, are the principles of fear and of sympathy implanted in our nature; and we well know, that when these are brought into action upon any subject, they produce mighty effects. The persons most affected at such times, are those, who from natural temperament, or circumstances of education or condition, are most alive to the influence of these emotions; the young, the illiterate, the timid, children who are easily alarmed, and females whose minds are susceptible of impressions from the wonderful and the terrible, and on whom, sympathy acts with the greatest power. Upon such persons, is urged the necessity of a total and immediate change of character; the terrors of an offended God are portrayed in glowing language; and the certainty of everlasting condemnation is denounced against those who do not awake from their vain trust in any acquired goodness. The sincerity and earnestness of the preacher demand attention; perhaps the prejudices of early instruction are on his side, and the whisperings of a tender conscience are in harmony with the denunciations that he utters. A regular systematic plan is pursued, and a religious awakening is now as much a matter of preparation and well-digested efforts as any of the business of life. A most important aid is derived from inculcating the necessity of immediate profession of christianity; not so much from the uncertainty of life as from the presence of divine favour, manifested to a certain town, or people. The returns of God's mercy are represented as occasional, or periodical, and when God graciously visits a place with the effusion of his Spirit, the inhabitants are told, that years may pass before he will again grant them these influences, and listen to their repentance. The favour of heaven seems like the manna of the children of Israel, if they sought for it when the Lord appointed not, they found none. The present is urged as the only time for repentance. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation, and those who do not listen now, are warned that the season of divine forbearance will soon be past, the influences of divine grace be withdrawn, and the chance of salvation lost. Yet, we are told in scripture, that 'the Lord will wait that he may be gracious.' When such means of exciting the feelings are employed, when the energy of sincere belief and anxious regard, is engaged to enforce them, when those to whom they are directed, are taken away from the

occupations of life, and brought into close communion with each other, so that the apprehensions of one shall find support in the fears of another, and the small voice of personal accusation shall grow loud as it rises from many breasts, till the cry of despair is heard through a village; can we wonder at the effects produced, and when these effects are thus explicable on the principles of human character and conduct, may we not justly question the reality of that spiritual influence to which they are ascribed, and which is supposed to excuse and consecrate them.

The question then returns upon us, how is a general revival of practical religion to be produced. We have said that indifference to religion, arises from that constitution of things, by which our thoughts are necessarily confined to our earthly condition. We shall then promote the object in view by the use of all those means, which are adapted to draw us away from the things around us, and lead us to the contemplation of another world, and the truths connected with it. Men must be made sensible that they are immortal and accountable beings, that they are the creatures of God, and constantly under his inspection. The relations thus established, must be presented to them in all their force, till they feel their importance. The true nature of the present life, its connexion with another, and the character of the future state as it is revealed in scripture, must be depicted in strong and glowing colours, and man be made ever to view himself as the child of God and the heir of immortality. The imperfection of every thing earthly should be declared, its frail and transient being, the unsatisfying nature of this world's pleasures, and the cares and vexations which attend this world's honours and riches. And as these are trite subjects, which we have already said, will be heard with little interest from their frequent repetition, they must receive all the assistance which can be derived from eloquence and study. They must be presented under new lights, in new connexions, and with various applications. They should not be stated as if they were school-boy themes, but with the earnestness and solemnity which a messenger directly commissioned from heaven to announce them, would feel. Lessons of admonition to the living should be taken from the past and the present, the dying and the dead. Nature should furnish forth her exhaustless store of evidence and sanction to the declarations of revelation, and men be forced to listen to the accents of mercy calling them to eternal life. The plain and simple truths of christianity should be urged. They are the most important, and interesting truths that man can know, and on these only can be founded a hope of consistent and persevering virtue. Putting aside what is of less importance, we must declare and reiterate

these, and teach men that they are not abstract speculations, but the living voice of nature and of God, in which they are deeply and eternally interested.

2. The minds of men should be enlightened, that they may understand the proof, the nature, and the importance of the truths which we seek to impress on them. The views which most persons have on religious subjects are very indefinite, founded on some indistinct ideas of the perfections and government of God, and the purpose of his revelation. Of the true character of the Being whom they worship and the religion which they profess they are ignorant. Their prejudices are strong in favour of certain modes of speech, and they talk about religion as about the most common matters of life, without a feeling of its sacred character. They have erroneous conceptions concerning many articles of religious belief, and in so far as truth is better adapted than falsehood to produce practical goodness, in the same degree should we seek to correct such erroneous conceptions. The great truths of the gospel are often prevented from producing their full effect by their union with the corrupt inventions of men. In proportion then as the community is enlightened in regard to religious truth, we may expect that it will improve in religious practice. An opportunity for effecting much good is here offered in the education of the young. By giving them right views of religion, we are laying the foundation of virtuous lives; by enabling them clearly to understand the sanctions and object and spirit of christianity, we are furnishing them with armour against the temptations of the world. But great caution is necessary to guard against the third cause of religious indifference which was mentioned, the influence of theological controversy. In explaining the truths of revelation, they should not be treated as subjects of speculation, but as the motives and rules of conduct. There is no need of introducing the tone of controversy into every statement of the doctrines of christianity. It is much better with the larger portion of society, those who are obliged to take their opinions in a great measure on trust, to state what we believe calmly and as undoubted truth, than to enter into discussions and arguments that can only puzzle and unsettle the religious notions of many, and make them look with doubt on all that they once believed, the true as well as the false. But the spirit of free enquiry is so diffused with us, that the duty of those who direct public sentiment is to regulate rather than to excite it. An attention to the spirit and precepts of the gospel should be most sacredly preserved. Every thing should be made to have a practical bearing, and men be led to view every point and circumstance of faith as affecting their eternal destiny by its influence

on their present conduct, and in this way only. What is now an obstacle to the progress of practical religion, may thus be made a powerful auxiliary, and the relation of every doctrine to morality and piety will be associated in the minds of men with their speculative views of its truth.

3. Another most important means of elevating the religious character of the community, is the example of those who are truly desirous to promote this end. Christianity is never more attractive than when seen in active life, walking among men, dwelling with them, and attending them in all their engagements and pleasures. The life of Jesus is the best recommendation of his doctrine. The eloquence of living well is the most persuasive oratory. It is understood and felt by all classes of people, and it is constantly acting upon them, without ever intruding itself or demanding their attention. The holy influence of christian principles on the conduct, calming the turbulence of passion, giving strength in trial, and consolation in sorrow, shedding a brightness over the prospects, and imparting a warmth to all the charities of social life, is an argument that reaches the heart of every one. It stops not at the understanding to be weighed, but is received and acknowledged by all the worthy feelings of our nature. This influence must be manifested in word and conversation, in temper and spirit, in doing and in suffering, in social intercourse and in public employment, in the remembrance and in the forgetfulness of our own interests. A very important moral benefit will result from this, not merely by winning men to virtue, but by removing an idea which is too common, that religion is an occasional thing, to be confined to certain places and times, but too sacred or too gloomy to be introduced into the common relations and duties of life. The true christian should strive to correct this impression by presenting his religion in its most amiable form, by showing how it may be made to mingle with all the enjoyments that we possess, and all the hopes that we cherish, being our companion and friend in the tumult of the world as well as in the seclusion of home, in the social circle as well as in the house of God.

We do not look for an immediate revival of religion throughout the community. The progress of truth must be gradual. There will not be a simultaneous awakening to holiness, but the good work of regeneration will go on slowly though surely. Still much may be done in our day towards establishing the empire of religion over the hearts and lives of men. We may transmit to the next generation a much higher sense of moral obligation, we may impress the stamp of religion more deeply on public institutions and manners, we may send down the authority of a good example, and those who follow us may be induced by the

light that we shed upon the path of duty, to press after us towards christian perfection. In this moral renovation, in this revival of the purity and holiness of the gospel, the clergy must be the active and efficient instruments. On them depends in a great degree, the state of religion among the people. Circumstances independent of them may hasten or retard the cause of christian truth and holiness, but to them are committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and when they enter the sacred office, they take upon themselves the most solemn duties. Let them look well to their charge.

> 'When nations are to perish in their sins,
> 'Tis in the church the leprosy begins.'

The demand is for serious and earnest preaching. There may be a false taste prevailing to a degree, which can only be satisfied with pretty writing and elegant thoughts, but there is a love of truth among the great body of the people, that is gratified by what is sound and valuable in sentiment and language. Truth should never be exchanged for ornament, nor made the mere censer in which the incense of flattery may be offered up to the public. The pulpit is not the place for intellectual philosophy or cold moral science to descant. Sin and holiness are more godly words than virtue and vice. They sound more solemnly, if they mean nothing more. Plain, practical preaching is the duty of the christian minister. Honest and serious expostulation, and warning and entreaty belong to him. Zeal and sincerity should be apparent in every sentence and every gesture. He should speak as standing between God and man, not only himself the disciple of Jesus Christ, but his successor in the high office of instructing mankind. Truth and earnestness will not fail of effecting their object. If the ministers of religion will be faithful and untiring in their duties, they will see a rich harvest of reward springing up in this life. Set forth the solemn truths of revelation; speak of the omniscience and holiness of God, the consequences of sin here and hereafter; declare the everlasting distinctions between virtue and vice, that misery is the portion and partner of wickedness; point out the connexion between this and a future life, the intimate dependence of the one upon the other, the relations which every action and word and thought has to enduring results; tell men that they are immortal, that the soul within them is to live forever; direct their view along the endless tract of ages before them; shew them the nature of the immortal principle in their breasts, that it is capable of continual and eternal progress in knowledge and virtue; carry them into the glories of the invisible world, and say to them that when the ma-

terial universe has passed away, they shall remain, and that while God and eternity continue, they will exist, and when innumerable ages shall have rolled on, and they shall have advanced through immeasurable degrees of improvement, eternity and perfection will still be before them. Press these truths upon them with sincerity and fervour, and men will listen to you; they will turn away from the dying objects of earth, and setting their affections on things in the heavens, live and die with a hope full of immortality.

ZACCHEUS, AN EXAMPLE OF TRUE CONVERSION.

The history of Zaccheus, as recorded by Saint Luke, furnishes an example of true conversion, and may with advantage be contemplated in this view. He was a chief publican, or the principal collector of taxes within a certain district; and had acquired great wealth. It is not however necessary to infer, that this was the fruit of dishonesty or extortion; for though these vices were the common disgrace of his profession, its honourable gains were abundant, and he might have been rich before he was a publican. He had heard of the fame of Jesus, and was anxious to see him. Our Lord, who knew his wishes, and observed his eager curiosity, indulged him with the most favourable opportunity of gratifying them. 'This day,' said he, 'I must abide at thy house.' The proposal was as welcome as it was unexpected to Zaccheus. He could not but feel himself honoured by such kindness from one, who had the reputation of a distinguished prophet; and he 'received him joyfully.' We have reason to think that the whole time was spent in useful conversation; and though the particulars are not related, yet from his discourses on other occasions, we may form some judgment of what were his instructions to this enquiring and candid publican. He appears to have explained the nature of his religion, and particularly the social duties it prescribes. In Zaccheus he found an attentive hearer; a mind willing to listen to the instructions he had to impart, and to be guided by them in his future conduct. He at once entered into the practical intent of our Saviour's lessons; and resolved, that if in any instances, unperceived, or unknown to himself, he had injured any one, he would make the amplest restitution. The liberality too with which he proposed to distribute his property was an acceptable evidence of his sincerity, and of the happy influence, which the instructions of Christ exerted upon his mind. Our Lord evidently approved his conduct,

and spoke of him as a true convert to christianity. In whatever degree his former conduct had been defective or vicious, he was reformed. He now complied with cheerfulness and alacrity with the precepts of the gospel, of which this is the sum, 'cease to do evil; learn to do well.' His reformation was strictly a saving reformation; the change, which his character underwent, was a saving change. For our Lord said concerning him, 'this day is salvation come to this house; forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.' He was a son of Abraham, not only by natural descent, as he was a Jew, but by having that faith, which is connected with good works. 'Know ye therefore,' saith Paul, 'that they, who are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.'

The history of Zaccheus, therefore, we adduce as an example of true conversion; and, considered in this view, it affords some very important instruction. Before he saw Jesus, he probably was not convinced of his being the Messiah. His interview with him appears to have removed all doubt upon this subject, and to have satisfied his mind, that Jesus was the teacher and Saviour, whom their nation was expecting. This belief would of course be attended with a persuasion of the truth and importance of all the instructions which Jesus imparted. Thus far, indeed, many proceed in their conversion to christianity, who, there is reason to fear, advance no further. They have the faith necessary to conversion. They admit that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that his religion is true and important. But their lives are not regulated nor their hearts purified by his precepts. Zaccheus was more consistent. As he believed, so he practised; he showed his faith by his works.

There was nothing preternatural in the manner, in which Zaccheus became a christian. It was accomplished through the instrumentality of the most simple and rational means, which caused no interruption in the exercise of his understanding, which was attended with no sudden commotions of passion, with no distressing convictions, with no painful apprehensions. It does not appear that he was brought to see that he had done nothing but sin; that his heart was totally depraved, that he could do nothing acceptable to God. and that all his efforts and virtues were useless. Nor are we told, that he continued in a state of doubt, and fear, and spiritual anguish for days and weeks, and was then brought out, without any agency of his own, to sudden joy and marvellous light. His conversion was simple, rational, natural. It consisted in yielding to the evidence, which Christ exhibited to prove that he was the Messiah, and in adopting a course consistent with this belief. We do not assert that con-

versions may not take place in a different way, or be attended with different exercises. There are numerous cases in the present day, where the means of religious knowledge are so widely diffused, and the christian faith has obtained an extensive prevalence, in which conversion to the speculative belief of the gospel, as was the case with Zaccheus, makes no part of the change. With the multitudes in a christian community, it is not the faith, but the life, that is to be altered. So far however as these conversions are preceded by long and depressing convictions of sin, by a consciousness of utter inability, or an unwillingness to do what God has commanded, by a sense of hatred or opposition to God, to Christ and the gospel, they differ from the example under our consideration. Now may we not reasonably suppose, that this example is recorded for our instruction and direction, not merely to show what conversion is, *but what circumstances may be expected to attend it?* Zaccheus was converted by the plain instructions of Christ to the faith and obedience of the gospel. He was brought to regard Jesus as the Son of God, as the Saviour of men, and to make the precepts of his religion the rule of his life. It is easy to perceive, that his former conduct might in many respects have been consistent with the gospel; as well as that his faith might in many particulars have been correct. In this case, his conversion consisted in amending his life, so far as it was bad, and in changing his belief, where that belief had been incorrect. When we speak however of his life and conduct, we mean, not merely his outward actions, but his dispositions, his affections, his real character. These, doubtless, so far as they were wrong, must have been made right, and conversion consists in this change, or at least includes it. But as Zaccheus before his conversion had probably a correct view of some doctrines, so he might have had some right dispositions, and might have performed some right actions. Nothing, at least, is said, which implies the contrary. It is true, some among the multitude regarded him as a sinner, and murmured that Jesus went with him to be his guest. But we are left to infer from the history that there were no gronds for their aspersions, and that they were the effect of their own unreasonable prejudice. The manner in which he received Christ and his doctrines does not seem to indicate a fixed and radical depravity. He said nothing of himself, from which this inference could be drawn. He makes no confession, that he had been entirely sinful; that his heart was totally corrupt; that his nature was totally depraved, and that he had never performed one good action. Whether we are to consider those who make this confession as being entirely sinful and destitute of all goodness, must depend on the difficult question, how

far we are to rely on a person's testimony against himself. But as Zaccheus made no such confession, and as nothing either in our Lord's conversation or in any part of his history justifies such an inference, we have no right to consider him as a being, wholly corrupt. Conversion then in his case was not, so far as appears, a change from total sinfulness to partial holiness. It was the *introduction of a new object of faith; and it was a life, consistent with that faith.*

So far indeed as we can form a judgment respecting the particular instructions of Christ on this occasion, by the practical result produced, and by his known instructions on other occasions, we have reason to believe, that the conversion of Zaccheus was effected by *a plain moral lesson*, in connexion with the miraculous works of our Lord. This distinguished publican was brought to see the error of his ways, not by being taught, that the human heart is naturally and completely depraved; that God has elected some to everlasting life out of his mere good pleasure, without any regard to their characters or works; that a special influence is given to these favoured individuals, which is withheld from the rest of mankind; that the Son of God is God himself, and yet submitted to death; and that to qualify himself to save the world, he took a complete man into union with himself. These, and others connected with them, were not the doctrines, by which Zaccheus was led to renounce sin and practice righteousness. When we hear him say, 'Half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken any thing from any man, I restore him fourfold'—we naturally infer, that Christ had been instructing him respecting the obligations of justice and charity; and that this was his reply to such instructions. We do not assert, that no conversions take place where the doctrines just enumerated, are preached; but that, so far as appears, the conversion of Zaccheus was not occasioned by these doctrines. We may add, that in the discourses of the apostles, some of which were instrumental in converting great multitudes, we find no trace of these or similar sentiments. Still further, there is no reason to think, that this publican was at any future period brought to believe these doctrines; or that he was ever required to profess his belief of them as a condition of being regarded as a christian. However essential to conversions these doctrines may be considered at the present day, it does not appear, that they were ever so considered by Christ and his apostles.

In fine, in the conversion of Zaccheus we perceive nothing special, extraordinary, or out of the common course of nature. The effect corresponded with the means that were used. The impressions on his mind, the faith he was led to adopt, and the

course he was induced to pursue, were precisely such as might be expected from the proofs and instructions, which Christ exhibited. That the same effect was not oftener produced is to be attributed to the force of prejudice and pride rather than to the want of something special or supernatural. Let us not be understood as denying the necessity of divine grace or of an heavenly influence to render the heart pure, and the life holy. Of this there can be no more doubt, than of the necessity of divine agency to cause the grass to grow, or to render our daily labours productive. The only question is, whether this divine grace is communicated according to fixed principles, and agreeably to the course of nature, or whether it be imparted in an arbitrary manner, and without any regard to established laws. Is the conversion of an individual an extraordinary work; the result of a special and uncommon influence; an influence, which is not connected with the efforts he makes, or the means, he employs? When we perform the appointed labor, we have reason to expect the harvest. Nor do we wonder, when it is granted to us, or speak of it, as indicating a special interposition of God in our behalf. In like manner, when persons attend upon the instituted means of religion, provided they do this in sincerity, out of a pure heart, with faith unfeigned, and indulging themselves in no dispositions or habits inconsistent with the use of these means, they have reason to expect, according to the established order of nature that they shall be converted, sanctified and saved. The gospel is as well adapted to sanctify the heart and life as are the sun and rain to render the earth fertile. In both cases, our labour and cultivation, in other words, the use of appropriate means, are indispensable. But a special supernatural influence is not required, nor have we any authority to believe, that it will be imparted. In the whole history of Zaccheus, no intimation is given of any introductory operation on the mind of the convert, and the same is true of all the instances recorded in the New Testament. In many cases the *means* were miraculous: but the *effect*, the faith or conversion that followed, was always natural; that, which might have been expected from the means employed.

If this view of the history of Zaccheus be correct, we shall perceive, that, in learning the nature and necessary circumstances of true conversion, it is more safe to follow the examples recorded for us in the New Testament, than those which take place among any class of christians at the present day. It is impossible not to remark how different are the accounts of conversions of modern times from the simple, rational, instructive history, which is here developed. In general, the religious character is formed by degrees, without tumult, or any sudden and surprising

change: 'even,' says one, 'as the temple of Solomon, which with all its magnificence and glory was raised up in silence. '*The house, when it was in building was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool* of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.'*

WHAT IS VITAL RELIGION?

We frequently hear the terms vital piety, vital christianity, *heart religion;* and these with kindred expressions are represented as essential to the character and hopes of true christians. They are terms which convey undoubtedly a most important meaning, but which have been greatly misunderstood, and sometimes strangely perverted. We propose a few remarks on some characteristics of vital religion; and to show what we mean, or ought to mean, when we pray, that it may be established in our own hearts or in the hearts of others.

Vital religion, that which is to exert a practical sanctifying influence on the character, has unquestionably much to do with the heart and affections. It gives its spirit and direction to these. But that these may be rightly exercised, it must lay its foundation, first of all, in just and clear conceptions of the truths of religion. The mind must be enlightened, so as to know the objects, evidence, and design of truth. This however, by no means, requires freedom from all error. There may be much of what the apostle denominates the spirit of faith, and a strong and habitual sense of religious truth, where there is much of speculative error. Still, if we would attain the best and purest influences of vital Christianity, the mind must be enlightened; there must be a spirit of knowledge and understanding as to the essential doctrines, character, and object of the gospel of Christ. This must be too obvious to require argument. It will be readily admitted, that the understanding must be the directing principle. It must depend on the views men entertain of the perfections, government, and law of God, what kind of service they render and with what spirit they worship him. If they imagine that God is a tyrant, they will serve him as slaves; or if, losing sight of the sanctions of his law, they allow themselves in an unwarrantable reliance on his mercy, they will probably not serve him at all.

* 1 Kings vi. 7.

If they think that religion consists in certain dogmas, or in compliance with certain forms, they will busy themselves to embrace those dogmas, and will make an easy exchange of substance for forms. If, for example, they imagine, that salvation depends, not on conditions, which they are able and required to perform, but on certain decrees of arbitrary election, with which they have no concern but as the passive subjects of such decrees, their error must exert an injurious influence upon their practice; and instead of the humble cheerful performance of duty, in the hope of divine acceptance, instead of the filial spirit of prayer, in the confidence, that we serve a father, who hears, and a God, who will help us, there is danger, lest there be found either the arrogance of presumption, or the wretchedness of despair.

Let the understanding therefore be informed and established in religious truth, if we would derive the best influences of pure christianity. For there is a connexion, as we have seen, inseparable between faith and practice; between speculative truth and vital godliness: and if it be objected to this, that we often find very pious and excellent persons, with very little knowledge and a great deal of error; the answer is, besides what has already been conceded upon this point, that, defective as may be their knowlege, and numerous as may be their errors, there will be found amidst all their ignorance and mistakes a few plain indisputable truths, which possess a controlling power over their minds and hearts, and are able to make them wise unto salvation.

It is essential also to vital christianity, that it interest and engage the affections. The throne of religion is in the heart. The affections it has been said, are the springs of action; and that we are never prompted to any earnest pursuit, but when these are enlisted. There cannot be a question, that to make religion an effectual principle, and to give it a controlling power, our hearts must be engaged. They must feel, and feel deeply, the transcendent grandeur, solemnity, and importance of its truths, and the invaluable interests of the immortal soul. They must be pervaded by the love of God, by reverence and gratitude towards Jesus Christ, by earnest desires after holiness. At the same time we shall perceive, that as religion has to do with the tenderest and the deepest sentiments of the heart, it must from its very nature preclude all ostentation. It shrinks instinctively from what is boastful and pretending. If it give utterance to the secrets of the soul, it is always with humility, and with a reverential regard to the decorums of time and place and circumstance. It loathes all parade and ostentation, as the sure indication of a low state both of religious knowledge and religious sensibility.

Again, the spirit of vital christianity demands habitual devo-

tion. He, who feels truly, will pray frequently and earnestly. He will regard prayer as the instrument of his virtue, the source of his strength, the solace of his sorrows, the reviving of his hope, the entrance of light and joy to his heart. Under a deep sense of its value and blessing, he will not fail, he will not cease to pray. He will go to the mercy seat and return thence with the delight of heart, with which we hold converse with a beloved and venerated friend. There may indeed be wanderings, there may be intermissions, and sometimes the world with its temptations or cares may intrude upon his thoughts; but as a prevailing characteristic, there will be the life of devotion. So essential is this, that it may be asserted without exception, that there can be no vital religion, where there is not the habit and the love of prayer.

This spirit will produce a tenderness of heart and conscience. There will be great susceptibility to whatever is connected with religion, or has any influence upon our religious state. A man, whose affections are thoroughly engaged upon any object, looks with solicitude upon every thing that has the least bearing upon that object; and the true Christian can regard nothing as indifferent, which can promote or retard, even in the smallest degree, his spiritual growth. His conscience is tender; and he feels every offence, as committed against a most kind and indulgent Father. He thinks fearfully of the odiousness and folly of all sin, its ingratitude as well as its danger.

This tenderness of heart is peculiarly favourable to the purest influences of religion, and is represented as a state acceptable in the sight of God. 'Because thy heart was tender,' said Jehovah to the penitent monarch of Israel, 'and thou hast humbled thyself before me, I have even heard thee, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace.'

In intimate connexion with this, let it not be forgotten, that true religion will produce and be accompanied by habitual seriousness. By this is not to be understood gloom, melancholy, distrust of God and his providence, or any thing inconsistent with that 'joy in God and in our Lord Jesus Christ,' which it is the influence of the christian's hope to inspire; but the seriousness of wise and holy men; of those who believe, that there is reality in religion, and that subjects of infinite interest, even the safety of their immortal souls, depend upon present conduct and character. It is indeed impossible to think at all upon the objects, duties, prospects, and solemn alternatives of religion without seriousness. He, who can trifle upon such a theme; he, who has even a suspicion, to say nothing of a firm conviction, that his whole future destiny, the happiness or the wretchedness of his immortal soul

depends upon his obedience here, cannot but be serious. Upon such a theme, carelessness or indifference were madness.

Another most important effect of vital religion will be to cherish and improve our social virtues. It will exert an happy influence over our domestic and social relations, diffusing through all our conversation its own spirit of benevolence and love, making us kindly affectioned one towards another, in honor preferring one another. With just views of the nature of the religion of Christ, and of our mutual relations and dependencies, we shall see the utter inconsistency of every form of censoriousness or uncharitableness. The better we understand the mind of Christ, the more deeply we enter into the intent of his religion, the more humble and forbearing shall we become. With a strong sense of our infirmities and sins, we shall be the more ready to regard with tenderness those of our fellow disciples: and though, as the apostle enjoins, we shall distinguish things, that differ, not putting darkness for light or light for darkness, nor letting the evil we see in a brother to be to us as his good; we shall never suffer even our keenest perception of these differences to impair the kindness of our temper. It will be one of the first and best lessons of vital christianity, that love is the fulfilling of the law; that one of the most acceptable tokens of our 'having passed from death unto life,' from sin to holiness, is our unfeigned love of the brethren; and that whatever may be our professions, however high our attainments in other regards, we may be certain, that we are strangers to genuine religion, till we have put away all malice and uncharitableness, and are kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us. In truth, there is nothing more opposed to true christianity, than the spirit of bitterness and alienation. This is that spirit of Anti-Christ, against which the apostle warns us; far more dangerous than any speculative errors, or mistakes in doctrine, and is precisely that *heresy*, which saint Paul, with all his kindness, calls damnable. If therefore we would try our interest in the character and hopes of vital religion, we must ask ourselves whether its fruits are seen in our tempers and lives. Does it diffuse its gentle and benevolent influence through our social and domestic relations? Does it make us kind, affectionate, faithful as husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and dependents? under its influence are we less worldly and covetous, envious and resentful? are we less tenacious of our own rights, and less willing to take advantage of the wants, or infirmities of others? In fine, is the kingdom of God within us; in its meek and humble, its kind and forgiving temper, has it found its place and does it hold possession of our hearts?

It must not be omitted, that the character of spirituality, or of heavenly-mindedness, is essential to inward religion. Under this comprehensive term are included just views of the present world, regulated affections and desires, contentment and submission under trials, and ardent pursuit of things heavenly. It seeks first the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof; and rests for comfort under every sorrow and for strength in all temptation on the promised grace of God and the hope that is full of immortality.

Lastly, and above all, it will exhibit its energy and truth in unfeigned and universal obedience. Without this indeed, we are taught by an authority not to be denied, that all else is nothing. He that talks of his love to God, and his liveliness of faith, and his rapturous experiences, and yet transgresses or neglects the law of God, may please himself and get a name among his fellow mortals, but what shall he do, when in the light of God's judgment, and in the retributions of eternity, it shall be said unto him, 'I never knew you; depart from me, thou worker of iniquity.'

We have exhibited some general views of what may be regarded as essential to vital christianity. There is nothing here opposed to the simple, pure, and fervent spirit of the gospel of Christ. Here is a religion, alike removed from the indifference of the worldly and the blind transports of the fanatic; something, which we can all understand, and admire, and practise; which can give us all we need as a rule of life; as our solace in care and sorrow; our hope in death, and our light to immortality. For a religion like this, we should labour and pray, that it may be revived and increased within and around us; that our love of it may abound more and more, in knowledge and in all judgment; that under its pure influences the beauty of the Lord our God may be upon us; so that truth may spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven.

MISTAKES CONCERNING ZEAL.

The first great mistake which I shall notice, in regard to the zeal of christians, is its exercise, not according to faith in the divine origin of their religion, and to the consequent moral purposes which it was meant to serve; but according to a great variety of particular dogmas, explained by certain established phrases of human invention, and often corrupted by the mixture of human opinions. It is not my purpose to particularize these

doctrines and opinions, nor to vindicate the innocence of error. Knowing however, as we do, that, in the early ages of christianity, the most trifling verbal disputes rent all christendom into factions, from East to West, and that councils and fathers were continually waging war against each other about modes of expression and external forms, as well concerning unintelligible distinctions in regard to the person of Christ and the Divine Spirit, as concerning holidays and the solemn festival of the supper, the true christian will beware of contributing any thing which may excite zealots in religion to act over again such scenes of bigotry and disorder. But what is more common than to hear it gravely asserted, that this or that doctrine is essential to religion, and thus to mark the division between the true and the nominal christian? The nominal christian, one would suppose, is he who has the name, without the character; he who acknowledges the letter, without regarding the spirit. But he, who, with the strongest professions of faith is devoured by a zeal which makes him censorious and vindictive. (it matters not to what party he belongs) needs much discipline in the school of Christ. It is a fearful truth, that, with the mass of mankind, the measure of zeal is determined by a false scale. Discourse seasoned with expressions indicating violent excitement, and followed out by corresponding external actions, is, in the main, more sure to command the appellation of holy zeal, than the warm breathing of the true christian spirit, which is peaceful as well as animated, and ardent only in kindness and love.

Certain classes of christians have been censured for coldness and indifference, on the subject of disputed doctrines, chiefly, perhaps, from their readiness to admit, as well in practice as in speculation, the right of private judgment. It is one thing to believe that our opinions are founded in truth, so that by fair and gentle means we would persuade others to embrace them, and quite another to pronounce positive judgment concerning every thing, pretending to know with certainty, what we merely believe to be true, and endeavouring to bring odium on all who presume to controvert our favourite doctrines. One would think that the history of our own minds, the personal experience of our own revolutions in the speculative part of morality and religion, would be enough to temper our zeal, and guide its efforts in favour of practical good. For, after all, it is that divine illumination which affects the heart, and makes the life better, that chiefly promotes our happiness here, and fits us to enjoy it hereafter. I will not say how much we should lose, if all the nice distinctions and controversies concerning what are sometimes called the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, were reduced to ashes; but it

may in truth be said, that he who embraces the religion of Christ with all the heart, who, from deep convictions of its reality, is susceptible of lively impressions from the various touching incidents in the life of his Saviour, from his tender concern for his disciples, from his example and his instructions, is melted into love, which he would not exchange for all the cold refinements of human wisdom.

In regard to the doctrines and internal contents of the New Testament, the highest object is to give them their best moral effect on mankind, by producing the greatest good of the greatest number. They who think to accomplish this by practising upon human credulity, and prostrating the understanding before the altar of a blind and implicit faith, may tell us that they are only claiming belief in the peculiar doctrines of the gospel. But is it credible that there is any thing in Christianity, which teaches us to scorn that inspiration of God which hath given us understanding? Is it in religion alone, that the intellectual man is to be degraded to a mere piece of mechanism, and to get the measure of truth by letters, and words, and sounds, without any corresponding illumination of the mind and affections of the heart? I do not affirm that there is nothing peculiar in christianity that demands an enlightened zeal. It was no small event in the history of religion, that God endowed a man of humble origin with the gifts that distinguished the author and finisher of our faith; by which he was enabled to ingraft such a pure, unostentatious religion, into whatever was sound, either of Jewish or pagan growth; pruning from the first the cumbersome branches of the ritual, and stripping from the last whatever might impair the vigour of this new object of culture. It is sufficiently peculiar to exhibit our zeal in his cause, that he imparted such perfect rules and axioms for the government of ourselves, and extending to the various domestic and social relations; that he voluntarily sacrificed his life in the cause of human happiness, and gave evidence of that future life which he promised, by his own resurrection. I pretend not to give an enumeration of every thing peculiar to our faith as christians; but only to say that there are certain truths of christianity, which speak directly to the heart of every sincere and humble believer, and prepare him for the reception of all essential doctrines.

An unreasonable zeal is often manifested in contentions concerning particular denominations of churches. It is true, every one has a right to his preference, regard being paid in his choice to the simple rules and modes of discipline emanating from a religion, which demands no show or ostentation, and all whose ordinances and external observances are the means of making us

better, and not the proofs that we are good enough. The statutes under which a community of christians is united, and the different orders of men that compose a particular church, result from a conventional arrangement that has been formed, or virtually assented to, by its members. It happens here, for the most part, that we adhere to the church in which we have been educated. As in civil institutions, one does not study the forms of government, in order to determine under which he will place himself for security, or from the hope of promotion, so it is in ecclesiastical: our attachments are formed from early prejudices, and example; and it rarely happens that we relinquish the communion of our fathers, whatever liberty of choice is at our command. Now this is much better than a continual state of uncertainty and change. It may be regarded as a good providence, that restrains the capriciousness of man in the *external* parts of that religion, whose *substance* is his chief good; and thus withholds the lures and the nutriment of proselyting zeal.

It is not intended by these remarks to impair the exercise of individual judgment, or to censure the man who withdraws from a church, whose observances he thinks unauthorised and corrupt; and especially from one whose privileges depend on a belief in opinions, whose truth he does not admit. A church may become so deformed, so monstrous, either by corrupt practices veiled under the feigned sanctions of holy, hereditary power, or by substituting a body of school divinity in place of the bible, as not only to justify individuals in abandoning its communion, but even to call for decided opposition to its unhallowed rites and customs, and formularies.

The true catholic church is the church universal, embracing all who acknowledge the same master, and receive the same records of divine truth contained in the history of Christ and the writings of his apostles. This church, when we go beyond the sphere in which we ordinarily move, is a noble object of regard. When we behold it, in imagination, divested of faction, its members agreeing in certain sublime truths, abstracted from all subtile refinements, worshipping one and the same God, submitting to the same master, learning of the same teacher, touched by the same affecting incidents in his life, following him to the grave, rising with him to immortal life, and reposing on him with confidence for happiness without end; the heart expands with a generous rapture, which nothing else can equal. And are we compelled to believe that all this is illusion? If it be not *general*, is there not *something* of this christian union in the christian church? No doubt there are moments, when sincere christians, forgetting their differences as partizans, feel that they are members of one body, the head of which is Christ.

It is true, however, as well in regard to zeal for the good of others, as to all the generous affections, that the sphere of action is necessarily limited. In order to embrace what is practicable, our zeal, for the most part, must be expended on those more immediately about us. It is then, by crossing the path of those who are pursuing a similar end by a different road, that we chance upon collisions, and mutually reproach each other for mistaking the true objects of regard, and wandering out of the way.

Are there no correctives for these mistakes and abuses in the exercise of zeal, on subjects pertaining to our common religion? There are certainly no distinct interests among the disciples of the same master, but such as arise from the intermixture of human passions. The mere differences of opinion on religious subjects, that result from natural temperament, from education, or from peculiarities of mind, are entitled to the same indulgence, as similar varieties of sentiment on other subjects. There is no necessity therefore, one would suppose, of a cautious and studied reserve, on the one hand, nor of a vengeful ferocity on the other. Truth is the great object; and it is a most incongruous notion, to pretend that a religion of immaculate purity can be diffused by insidious arts; that a religion, peaceful in its nature, and benign in its genuine effects, can be forced upon men by external violence.

The fervour of true zeal is not violent. He who is under its influence regards the rights of conscience, and has no disposition to frighten others into the adoption even of the truth. Yet how liable is this zeal to be mistaken for coldness, because it is uniform in its operation, and never vents itself in bursts of indignation, rage, and censoriousness. However constantly it has its end in view, yet because it is marked by none of these outward expressions of violent excitement, it passes for nothing worth. There are indeed occasions when fervour may be allowed to kindle into flaming heat, and earnestness may ascend to vehemence and clamour; but, in the ordinary course of the christian life, this is a false zeal, fed by bad passions, and directed to wrong objects. We are not all to proffer our services as reformers, though we have a right to resist every encroachment on our liberty. In an enlightened period of the world, and among a free people, there is no great danger of any body of men getting a monopoly of religion, distributing it to such as will pay the price of it, by putting their consciences out of their own keeping, and withholding it from all who will not purchase it at so dear a rate. Living, as we do, in such a period, and among such a people, it is to be presumed that we need no weapons of

attack, or defence, but pure hearts, and faith supported by rational arguments.

As genuine zeal is free from violence, so also it is exercised without extravagance. I wish neither to indicate those fanatical excesses which we are seldom called to witness, nor to declaim against raving absurdities which we rarely have to encounter. But as there is liable to be, even in religious opinions, much of fashion and caprice, we should guard against all unreasonable and exclusive views of particular topics, to the neglect of the great and ultimate purposes of religion, which has as much to do with the heart, as with the understanding. To a certain degree of bigotry we are all liable; but those certainly are most under its influence, who are determined to support a system, which they not only believe to be true, but concerning which they are certain that they can in no respect be deceived. When we find a man faltering in his arguments, and claiming absolute certainty on speculative subjects, after reasoning fails, we may be sure he has that zeal, which is not according to knowledge. It is not necessary to be positive, in order to be ardent; and though a certain degree of enthusiasm is the natural companion of zeal, yet, if genuine, it is neither dogmatical nor impatient. It may lead us to believe many things founded in a moral sentiment within us, for which we do not go about to seek the proofs; but it does not lead to personal hostility against those whose results are at variance with our own.

It is impossible to point out the measure of zeal for men of all sects, varying as they do, in their natural temperament, and in the accidents of education and early prejudices. He who never meets with any difficulties in subjects of religion, who has some short expedient for solving all doubts, on every subject, will claim the right to manifest something more of ardour in maintaining his opinions, and pressing them upon others, than he who weighs all the varying shades of probability, and in many things can satisfactorily account for diversity of sentiment. A person of the first description, who sees every thing clearly, and understands all mystery and all knowledge, may well deplore the blindness of his unfortunate brethren, who are not blessed with the same unclouded spiritual vision. The fanatic may be expected to call that man a cold, philosophizing christian, who thinks that reason has any concern in matters of faith; and the enthusiast may wonder, that what he feels to be true, others are waiting to receive on evidence presented to the mind. But it may be admitted as a maxim, that zeal should never trample on the rights of conscience. We ought never willingly to offend a good man, or put the faith of a sincere christian to too severe a test,

however much of error may appear to be mingled with his belief.

To adopt the words of St. Paul, 'it is good to be zealously affected *always* in a good thing.' It is not by violent, feverish, and intermittent efforts, that the best ends are accomplished. It is in religion, as in every thing else, that whatever is worth acquiring, is to be diligently sought. He who contents himself with the shreds and meagre gleanings of learning, is liable to be a pedant; and the superficial inquirer on moral and religious subjects, who makes great pretensions from getting the common, second-hand, thread-bare reasonings of theologians, is a pedant in sacred things, and is often led astray by blind and ignorant zeal. The man whose uniform endeavours to become practically religious, are seconded by common-sense, and who pretends not to be wise above what is written, is not far from the kingdom of God. He finds that religion, to have its genuine effect is to be incorporated with every thing; that it does not consist in occasional spasms, in the multitude of external observances, in neglecting his proper vocation; but in a conscience void of offence, in the affections of the heart accompanying the outward acts of devotion, and in principles founded in christian morality, governing his pursuits and his intercourse with mankind. He is not always in a heat; nor, on the other hand, always perplexing himself with doubts, and falling into uncertainty and delay in cases of conscience; but he has a standard of right and wrong in a well regulated mind, by which for the most part, his conduct is governed, without the tortures of perpetual scruples, and hesitancy in every action.

It is then a zeal uniform and constant; embracing all duty and subjected to religious principle, that becomes the christian character: not a busy, and talkative, and noisy zeal, which creates needless interference in things without our proper sphere of action; but a zeal, which, while it warms our own hearts, animates us with benevolent regards to our brethren, leads us to stated homage and devotion to the most high God, and thus prepares us for a future state of action more pure, of affections more enlarged and holy, and of devotion more ardent than we can here enjoy; and consequently of happiness uninterrupted and unimpaired by such contending interests, as, in this present life, distract our attention, and in all our most refined, intellectual pleasures, mingle something of alloy.

IMPROPER VIEWS IN PREACHING.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

Mr. Editor—I offer for insertion in the Christian Disciple, the translation of a passage in Gisbert's *L'Eloquence Chrétienne, dans l'idée, and dans la pratique.* Gisbert was of the Roman Catholic Church. He published the second edition of this work in 1728. It contains a great deal that is highly interesting and useful, and though much will of course be found unsuitable to the state of preaching amongst protestants, yet there is much also that is universally applicable, and has perhaps, never been placed in a clearer and truer light than in this book. L'Enfant speaking of it, exclaims, O, l'admirable and le terrible livre!—and adds, 'it is equally suited to encourage and perfect good preachers, and to improve bad ones. One may say of this author, with at least as much truth as Boileau said of Longinus, that *in speaking of the sublime he is himself sublime.* It would be necessary to copy the whole volume if I would point out all the fine passages. There is scarcely a selection to be made.'

In selecting a passage for publication I have been not a little perplexed to choose one which might serve as a fair specimen of a book which I believe is little known, and some acquaintance with which might be not wholly unprofitable. I have been however the less solicitous to present your readers with the finest passage, as I hope to be encouraged to make other translations for your future numbers. But in choosing, as I have, almost at random, I could not choose ill. The title of the Chapter is IMPROPER VIEWS IN PREACHING.

The clergy doubtless make it their aim to excite their hearers to virtue and to dissuade from vice; let us not therefore search too deeply into their hearts, lest we find among them, some one who, seeming to preach Jesus Christ only, really preaches but for his own reputation. Let the preacher then probe his own heart; let him reflect without self deception upon all the motives which induced him to enter the ministry, and every design which he has in view in its exercise. It may be that he will find the spirit which animates him, is not christian zeal alone.

There are some who enter the profession with no other design than that of preaching. They preach, because it is an eligible employment. They must have some occupation; so they preach; they preach for the sake of preaching. Ask them if it is their desire to eradicate error, to correct vice, to bring

sinners to repentance? They will tell you, if they speak sincerely, that they do not trouble themselves at all about it, that they preach, and that is all they pretend to do. As for the rest, let each profit by it as best he may. What can we expect from a man who composes a sermon and delivers it with this frigid indifference? Today he preaches upon avarice; but do you believe that he interests himself in the welfare of the misers to whom he speaks? Not at all. He merely wants to declaim upon avarice; and the covetous man who listens to him returns as avaricious as he went. These are men who have in view no object either good or bad. If some little praise follows them, they are pleased to receive it; but it is what they are not very solicitous about. They speak, they beat the air, they are so many mere voices. They are without zeal, and also without ambition. They labour neither for the honours of this world or of the world to come.

We see others again who embrace the clerical profession with wholly profane views: they merely wish to put themselves forward in the world to acquire a name, to be distinguished; and the christian pulpit appears to them a proper field. How many there are, who preach to make a fortune; how many to obtain patrons; how many to win the regard and confidence of the ladies; how many from cupidity and avarice; how many more that the public may say, what a learned man! how accomplished! what an agreeable speaker!

The profession is ruined by the admission of these foreign motives. They bring into it the very worst taste in eloquence. Your sole desire is to appear to be a scholar, deeply learned in the sciences. What follows? Why, your sermons are a mere tissue of useless quotations; fine spun arguments, in which nobody is interested. You wish to obtain the reputation of genius, and of acquaintance in the world; you then infallibly run into the use of a thousand false ornaments; your diction is affected, and your whole style artificial and formal.

I will venture to say that if you will suppress every motive and design unsuited to your profession, you will find yourself almost immediately in the right course. You have very nearly acquired a good taste, when you have got rid of a bad. From this moment think only how to be useful. If you will embellish the truth, let it be only as much as will enable you to find for it an easy admission to the minds of your hearers. Such ornaments will be manly, simple and unaffected; and far from weakening the truth will give it new force, and place it in its fairest light. Thus you will sacrifice without compunction all which you would make use of merely that the world might call you a man of genius, learning and accomplishments.

The preacher will find it his interest to make a generous sacrifice of all his most brilliant thoughts, to the welfare of his hearers. It is natural to love our fine thoughts; to love our own better than those of others. In the eyes of our vanity, these are our finest offspring. This therefore will be a difficult sacrifice for self love to make. What is most brilliant, one is ready to think most valuable, and if he does not take care, he will suffer himself to be hurried along by the ardour of youth. He will not even conceive it possible to write well without attempting to dazzle. He will not be rid of this bad taste, until he has acquired a relish for true eloquence, and until he has relinquished every other design except that which every christian orator ought to propose to himself; to excite his hearers to do well, and avoid evil; to make an impression on their hearts; to bring them to repentance. There will at times arise in his mind, while composing a sermon, certain turns of thought or expression, which charm at first and impose upon him by their brilliancy; but he must resist their seductive charms; he must do violence to his feelings, and accustom himself by degrees to reject them, as if they were really bad; thereby following the advice of the prophet, 'Dash these little ones without mercy against the stones.'

By what means, think you, did Demosthenes bear away the palm of eloquence from the many competitors who disputed it with him in the Athenian senate? had he more talents than they? more genius? perhaps not. In what then, *was* he superiour? in having a nobler design! When Demosthenes spoke, he had in view the good of his country alone. It was for that he harangued, that was the prime motive which influenced him; it was that which gave him all his solidity, vigour, persuasiveness, by which he transported and mastered all. In short, it was that which rendered him the most illustrious orator in all Greece, whilst others, who thought only how to please and flatter the Athenians, received nothing more than vain praises and empty applause, unable to get beyond the merit and reputation of declaimers and sophists.

Can you with truth give in your own favour the testimony which Plato has rendered to himself. 'I do not speak to *please;* I endeavour to say, not what will be most agreeable, but most useful.'

If certain preachers had no other view than the conversion of their hearers, they would write very different discourses from those which now attract for them so much admiration. Flowers would not be spread over them in such profusion. They would be less admired perhaps, but would still be better sermons.

The things for which a sermon is greatly admired, applauded

and cried up, are not always best. It does not follow that a thing is really good, because it is admired; and the reason of this is, that admiration supposes, not that the object is of great real value, but only that it is new, or at least appears to be so; consequently we say, what indeed, appears to be a paradox, that an audience may occasionally admire certain passages, while those very passages may be utterly repugnant to reason and good sense. It often happens too, that we soon condemn what we had at first so much admired.

Applause and acclamations are far from being unequivocal proofs of a lofty and sublime eloquence. Embellishment of a very inferiour kind is sufficient to excite these flattering murmurs in an audience, while the really sublime, by its weight and magnificence, quells the tumult, and impresses upon the hearer a silence which suspends every faculty.

A kind of civil war raged for a long time in one of the cities of Africa. The inhabitants separated into two armed bodies, and fought each other on certain days of the year, which they considered as solemn festivals. The combat was always bloody, and fatal to some of the combatants. Augustine undertook to abolish this brutal custom. He ascended the pulpit, and employed all the power of his eloquence. The people were charmed with his fine speaking, and lavished on him applauses and acclamations. This only afflicted him however, and served to convince him how far he was from having attained the loftiest pitch of eloquence; and it was not until the applauses ceased, and he found them followed by sighs and tears, that he felt he had succeeded.

There is one species of applause which is received from actions, not from words. This is what Chrysostom wished to obtain from his hearers. 'Of what use,' says he, 'are the acclamations I hear, and these loud marks of approbation? I wish to be rewarded not by your praises, but by your good deeds. This is the benefit I wish to derive from my discourse, and this is all my ambition. I prefer your conversion to a kingdom.' The applause of actions is an almost infallible proof of real eloquence; that of words is very equivocal.

It is the mark of a truly good preacher, that, while he is actually preaching, the hearer does not think of him at all; that is, does not consider whether he speaks well, has talents, learning, refinement, gracefulness; but is entirely engrossed by the subject of the discourse, and the impression it makes on his mind and heart; so that if he thinks of the preacher at all and praises him, it is only upon reflection afterward. He will perceive then, that this man affected him, persuaded him, convinced

him; he must be then an able man, a powerful preacher. This is a very fair conclusion. Such praise is not unsuitable to the christian orator; on the contrary, it is the just and legitimate tribute which no reasonable hearer can help paying to true eloquence.

Every thing in a religious discourse should be for the hearer's sake, and nothing for the speaker's; for one enters the pulpit to preach, not to exhibit. He should be constantly asking himself while writing, will this attract the hearer's attention to myself? If so, strike it out. If sermons were built upon this principle, how many which have been admired and applauded, would be felt as worthless!

A sermon ought to be a sort of entertainment, at which every thing is served up for the hearer alone. But this order is reversed, and the preacher is enjoying an abundant and delicious repast, while the hearer is perishing with hunger. And more than this; for the hearer, who should have no object but to partake and be nourished by the bread of life, often finds himself only called upon to furnish by his admiration and applause, an agreeable but dangerous food to the vanity of the preacher.

It will generally happen, that when the preacher has had no view, in composing his sermon, but to his own reputation, the hearer will be led to think only of him, in hearing it delivered. It is sermons thus written, which produce the exclamations, what a delightful speaker! what brilliant expressions! what beautiful figures! The good preacher makes his hearers think of themselves; the bad makes them forget themselves.

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

JEREMY TAYLOR ON THE DIFFICULTY OF EXPOUNDING SCRIPTURE.

This great writer, in his Liberty of Prophecying, devotes a section to an enquiry into the means of expounding scripture. He regards these means as of two kinds, external and internal. The external are church authority, tradition, fathers, councils and decrees of bishops. These he treats of afterward; and certainly no consistent Protestant can think them entitled to much deference. Here he considers only 'the uncertainty and invalidity' of those means which are internal: and these he

describes to be five: the context, the comparing of scripture with scripture, the analogy of reason, the analogy of faith, and the consulting of the originals.

1. 'Sometimes the sense is drawn forth by the context and connexion of parts. It is well when it can be so. But when there are two or three antecedents, and subjects spoken of, what man or what rule shall ascertain me that I make my reference true, by drawing the relation to such an antecedent; to which I have a mind to apply it, another not? For in a contexture, where one part does not always depend upon another, where things of differing natures intervene and interrupt the first intentions, there it is not always very probable to expound scripture, take its meaning by its proportion to the neighbouring words. This way of interpretation does not warrant any man to impose his expositions upon the belief and understanding of other men too confidently and magisterially.

2. 'Another great pretence of medium is the conference of places; which Illyricus calls a mighty remedy, and a most happy exposition of holy scripture: and indeed so it is if well and temperately used. But then comparing of places is of so indefinite capacity, that if there be ambiguity of words, variety of sense, alteration of circumstances, or difference of style amongst divine writers, then there is nothing that may be more abused by wilful people, or may more easily deceive the unwary.' After mentioning some abuses of this mode of interpretation, he adds: 'This is the great way of answering all the arguments that can be brought against any thing that any man hath a mind to defend; and any man that reads any controversies of any side, shall find as many instances of this vanity almost as he finds arguments from scripture. This fault was of old noted by St. Austin; for then they had got the trick, and he is angry at it.

3. 'Oftentimes scriptures are pretended to be expounded by a proportion and analogy of reason. And this is as the other; if it be well, it is well. But unless there were some universal understanding, furnished with infallible propositions, by refering to which every man might argue infallibly, this logic may deceive as well as any of the rest. For it is with reason as with men's tastes: although there are some general principles which are reasonable to all men, yet every man is not able to draw out all its consequences, nor to understand them when they are drawn forth, nor to believe when he does understand them.'—'To instance once more. When Christ, in "*feed my sheep*," and "*thou art Peter*," gave power to govern the church, (for to that sense the church of Rome expounds those authorities) by a certain consequence of reason, say they, he gave all things

necessary for exercise of this jurisdiction, and therefore in *feed my sheep* he gave him an indirect power over temporals; for that is necessary that he may do his duty. Well, having gone thus far, we will go further upon the parity of reason; therefore he hath given the pope the gift of tongues, and he hath given him power to give it; for how else shall Xavier convert the Indians? He hath given him also power to command the seas and winds that they should obey him; for this is also very necessary in some cases. And so *feed my sheep* is, receive the gift of tongues, command the winds, dispose of princely diadems, and the possessions of the people, and the influences of heaven too, and whatsoever the parity of reason will judge equally necessary in order to *feed the sheep.*

4. 'Others pretend to expound scripture by the analogy of faith; and that is the most sure and infallible way, as it is thought. But upon stricter survey it is but a chimera, a thing in the clouds, which varies like the right hand and the left hand of a pillar, and at the best is but like the coast of a country to a traveller out of his way: it may bring him to his journey's end though twenty miles about; it may keep him from running into the sea, and from mistaking a river for dry land; but whether this little path or the other be the right way it tells not. So is the analogy of faith; that is, if I understand it right, the rule of faith, that is, the creed. Now were it not a fine device to go to expound all the scripture by the creed? there being in it so many thousand places, which have no more relation to any article in the creed, than they have to the eclogues of Virgil.' 'If you extend the analogy of faith further than that which is proper to the rule or symbol of faith, then every man expounds scripture according to the analogy of faith: but what? his own faith: which faith if it be questioned, I am no more bound to expound according to the analogy of another man's faith, than he to expound according to the analogy of mine. And this is it that is complained on, of all sides that overvalue their own opinions. Scripture seems so clearly to speak what they believe, that they wonder all the world does not see it as clear as they do: but they satisfy themselves with saying, that it is because they come with prejudice; whereas if they had the true belief,—that is, theirs,—they would easily see what they see. And this is very true: for if they did believe as others believe, they would expound scriptures to their sense. But if this be expounding according to the analogy of faith, it signifies no more than this,— be you of my mind, and then my arguments will seem concluding, and my authorities and allegations pressing and pertinent. This will serve on all sides, and therefore will do

but little service to the determination of questions, or prescribing to other men's consciences on any side.

'Lastly, consulting the originals is thought a great matter to interpretation of scriptures. But this is to small purpose. For indeed it will expound the Hebrew and the Greek, and rectify translations; but I know no man that says that the scriptures in Hebrew and Greek are easy and certain to be understood, and that they are hard in Latin and English: the difficulty is in *the thing* however it be expressed, the least is in the language. If the original languages were our mother tongue, scripture is not much the easier to us; and a natural Greek or a Jew can with no more reason nor authority obtrude his interpretations upon other men's consciences than a man of another nation. Add to this, that the inspection of the original is no more certain way of interpretation of scripture now, than it was to the fathers and primitive ages of the church; and yet he that observes what infinite variety of translations of the bible were in the first ages of the church (as St. Jerome observes) and never a one like another, will think that we shall differ as much in our own interpretations as they did, and that the medium is as uncertain to us as it was to them: and so it is. Witness the great number of late translations, and the infinite number of commentaries, which are too pregnant an argument, that we neither agree in the understanding of the words nor of the sense.

'The truth is, all these ways of interpreting of scripture, which of themselves are good helps, are made either by design or by our infirmities ways of intricating and involving scriptures in greater difficulty; because men do not learn their doctrines from scripture, but come to the understanding of scripture with preconceptions in ideas of doctrines of their own; and then no wonder that scriptures look like pictures, wherein every man in the room believes they look on him only, and *that* wheresoever he stands, or how often soever he changes his station. So that now what was intended for a remedy becomes the promoter of our disease, and our meat becomes the matter of sicknesses. And the mischief is, the wit of man cannot find a remedy for it; for there is no rule, no limit, no certain principle, by which all men may be guided to a certain and so infallible an interpretation, that he can with any equity prescribe to others to believe his interpretations in places of controversy or ambiguity.'

'Now, since those ordinary means of expounding scripture, as searching the originals, conference of places, parity of reason, and analogy of faith are all dubious, uncertain, and very fallible, he that is the wisest will be very far from confidence. He will not willingly be prescribed to by others; and if he also be a

just man, he will not impose upon others; for it is best every man should be left in that liberty, from which no man can justly take him, unless he could secure him from error.'

HYMN.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

WITHIN thy temple, Lord! we bow,
To thee our trembling spirits rise;
O grant that we may bring thee now
A pure and holy sacrifice.

What is the world that it should share
Hearts which belong to God alone,
What are the idols reigning there
Compared with thee, Almighty One!

Fountain of living waters! we
To earthly springs would stoop no more;
Athirst we humbly turn to thee;
Into our hearts thy spirit pour.

HYMN.

Almighty God and King on high,
My spirit bows before thy throne;
How frail a creature, Lord, am I,
Whilst thou art the Eternal One!

This earth, the temple of thy love,
On its wide base thou laid'st of old;
The glowing skies that hang above,
Were at thy bidding all unrolled.

These shall be folded up again,
The earth shall pass with all its store,
But thy eternal years remain,
Thou art the same forevermore.

And as for us, oh what are we
That we should call upon thy name!
Transient and weak, we soon shall be
Low in the dust from which we came.

Thy boundless mercy calls us near,
And bids us look to Heaven, our home;
As children then we will not fear
Before thy living throne to come.

O precious privilege for us
On thee forever to depend,
To bring our filial praises thus
As to a Father and a Friend!

REVIEW.

ARTICLE XI.

The American First Class Book; or Exercises in reading and recitation: selected principally from modern authors of Great Britain and America; and designed for the use of the highest class in public and private schools. By JOHN PIERPONT, Minister of Hollis Street Church, Boston: author of Airs of Palestine, &c. Boston: published by William B. Fowle, and stereotyped by T. H. & C. Carter, 1823. Third edition.

IT was not to be expected, after the great improvements made in our public grammar schools within a very few years, that the old text book for the reading of the upper classes should be retained. Scott's Lessons, with all its imperfections and redundancies, had been so long in vogue, that the schools were filled with a motley company of editions, printed in the most incorrect and slovenly manner; though accuracy and a good degree of neatness are certainly most important requisites in a book of this kind. The 'various readings' alone amounted to a very considerable evil, misleading the pupils often and confounding the recitations. There was wanting a book of a higher character, suited better to our own country, and to the literary advancement of the present day; and the high favour, with which this work of Mr. Pierpont has been received into all our schools, is a pretty sure sign that he has done the public a service by its compilation. It contains within four hundred and eighty very neat pages two hundred and nine lessons, selected with taste and care chiefly from modern writers, American as well as English; and so arranged 'that they may be read in course, and at the

same time present that variety, in the frequent alternation of prose and poetry, and the constant succession of different subjects in each,' which will give relief both to learner and teacher. When such words occur as seem likely to embarrass the pupil by their foreign look or an unusual combination of letters, the true pronunciation of them is usually given at the bottom of the page; and very frequently in cases of words that are prevailingly mispronounced, the proper accent or force of the vowels is designated. This pains we think extremely well bestowed, and could even wish that it had been extended further, although the necessity of such a help will we confidently hope be growing less and less conspicuous. There is now so much of intelligence, skill and care, employed in the instruction of our public schools in the city, that no veteran errors of this sort will be able to hold their stand much longer, but be driven fairly out of the field. A vulgar and inaccurate manner of reading is giving place fast to a more refined one; and we do not despair of seeing in a short time the *r* restored fully to liberty, and poor final *g* having a voice wherever he makes his appearing. We expect that even at the University such disastrous accentuations as *résources*, *ex'tent*, *con'tents*, *in'crease*, *détail*, and *próceeds*, will be quite displaced; and that we shall be permitted to enjoy a noble chorus, sung by the most distinguished musical society in the United States, without being distressed by such specimens of what has been called 'the Boston dialect,' as 'HALLELUJAH! RAMEN!'

With respect to the pieces that compose this work, it cannot be expected that in every instance there should be a perfect similarity of taste and judgment; but we think it will at least be acknowledged universally, that they as a whole possess a high order of merit. Many most exquisite morsels of prose and verse are found among them; and if we are left to regret the necessity, which the modesty of the compiler laid on him, of adding to them nothing of his own, we can forget this loss of what another would have done, in the marks of a highly cultivated moral and poetical sense, which he has set as his own seal on the work. Indeed, we will confess our fear at first that the book was too fastidiously good;—that it would be found above the relish, and often above the comprehension of boys. Possibly this may be the case with some few of the selections. But that it is not generally so, experience seems to have determined already. The older children in the schools take great interest in their new lessons, learn to read them intelligently, and are even affected by the pathetic narratives of such writers as Wilson. Now though it may well be, that they cannot always enter into the upper beauties, and discern and enjoy the more refined charms

of a composition, still it seems desirable that, at this forming period of life, the most polished models in style should be set before them, and even the finer efforts of fancy. The experiment is at least well worth trying, whether much may not be thus early done for the cultivation of their taste and sensibility. In this view Mr. Pierpont's book seems to us very important. It is an attempt to improve the imagination and intellectual relish of the pupil, as well as to instruct him in facts, and furnish themes for reading and recitation.

In short, as a school-book this possesses decided advantages over any, with which we are acquainted; and the stout type-metal plates of the Messrs. Carter will guard it secure from the disorders, into which its predecessor was fated to fall. Even if considered only as a small collection of 'Elegant extracts,' it would deserve respectful accommodation on the parlour shelf. One may here regale himself, during the dull intervals of a long evening, with specimens from most of the distinguished living writers in Great Britain, not excepting the Author of Waverly and the fascinating New Monthly Magazine; and joined with these he will find the names of our own Buckminster and Channing, Webster and Everett, Irving, Bryant, Percival, and others.

ARTICLE XII.

A Family Prayer Book; containing forms of Morning and Evening Prayers for a Fortnight. With those for religious societies and individuals. Second edition, revised and enlarged. Boston. Cummings, Hilliard and Co. 1823.

There can be, we are sure, but one opinion respecting the value and importance of a Family Prayer-Book. Indeed it is only by providing a work of this kind which shall be satisfactory, and by earnestly recommending the use of it, that we can hope to revive a general observance of the duty of family prayer, and thus restore to society one of the most powerful means of domestic order, purity, and happiness. There is, it is well known, among our most exemplary men, and men, too, by no means destitute of religion, an invincible repugnance to praying *ex tempore*, or even from memory, in the presence of their families;—a repugnance arising, we suppose, from a sense of the awkwardness they might feel in commencing the practice; or from real diffidence; or from a consciousness of defects, which must prevent

their conducting the service in an edifying manner; or from a want of a fervent and self sustained glow of piety, which they may confess that they ought to possess, but which, as they do not in fact possess it, they think it would be vain and hypocritical in them to simulate. But we cannot conceive, that any of this repugnance would be felt against reading a prayer;—a prayer which they like, and which expresses their real feelings and sentiments, and for the proper reading of which nothing more is required than a devout manner and a serious mind. And even where a family has no immediate view to family worship, properly so called, such a work as we are recommending would be invaluable considered merely as a devotional book for private reading. Indeed as a mere devotional book for private reading it would possess some peculiar advantages, not only as it would serve by the nature of the topics introduced to connect all our daily cares and duties, and all our dearest earthly connexions and enjoyments, with religion and religious principle, but, also, because the very form of a direct address to the Deity, in which the language would be cast, would tend to keep our minds more continually turned towards Him, who is the object of our adoration.

We are not unapprized of the extreme difficulty there is in finding, or providing forms of prayer, which shall be entirely satisfactory. There is, indeed, a peculiar and essential difficulty in this species of composition. For a prayer, to satisfy us, must not only express our ideas correctly and forcibly, but also our feelings, and the exact measure of them. Now as there are very few, who think precisely alike even upon devotional subjects, and still fewer, who feel precisely alike, it is morally impossible, that any form of prayer should be prepared, which shall entirely satisfy any considerable number. The very circumstance that it satisfies one, is proof sufficient, that it cannot satisfy another, as his habits of thinking and feeling are different. This reasoning is not set aside by the fact, that all Episcopalians appear to be perfectly satisfied with the liturgy of their church; for it is a satisfaction growing much more out of the associations with which the book is connected in their minds, than out of any thing in the book itself.

It is unreasonable, therefore, to expect in taking up any book of prayers, that we shall be entirely satisfied on the first perusal. Nor is this necessary, nor even desirable always, as our devotional taste may be bad, and instead of needing a form of prayer that will gratify it, we may rather need one that will chastise and correct it. We should consider a prayer as sufficiently satisfactory, if kept from all material errors and defects by the careful observance of a few general rules. In the first

place, it should be kept wholly free from sectarianism. So obvious is this rule, and so obviously correct, that, we confess, it is unaccountable to us, why so many excellent men of the orthodox persuasion still persist in using their unscriptural and schismatical addresses and doxologies to the Deity. Do they really think, that they have found better words, than those *which the* HOLY GHOST *teacheth?* Or do they think it an object, thus gratuitously and wantonly to wound the feelings of those of their fellow-worshippers, who differ from them in opinion? But it is not enough, that our prayers speak a pure theology; they must speak it in a simple and affecting language. Every thing like literary affectation, or a capricious manner and style, is studiously to be avoided. It is this, that ruins Jay's Prayers, in many respects admirable. Hard words, abstract terms, chilling generalities should, also, be excluded as much as possible. If we would have a devotion living and breathing, it must be excited by language and images equally so. Enfield, and many other Unitarian composers and compilers of devotional books, have failed from not sufficiently regarding this principle. Any thing, however, is preferable to what is aptly enough termed by a strange combination of language—an *elegant prayer!* We have listened to the wildest fanaticism, and to the dullest stupidity in the shape of prayers; yet never have we been so thoroughly shocked and disgusted, as at this most untimely and irreverent parade of human vanity and affectation. To think that God will be moved by the fineries and fopperies of rhetoric, which might, perhaps, amuse the congregation, if they could understand them! It always reminds us of what was said by the ever-memorable Hales. 'Why measure we God by ourselves? and because *we* are led with gay shews, think it so with God? A puppet-player and dancer in Rome, because he pleased the people well, was wont to go up every day into the capitol and dance before Jupiter, and thought he did the god a great pleasure. Beloved! in many things *we* are like unto this puppet-player.'

Prayers, also, should be short. There is no surfeit so difficult to cure, as a surfeit of devotion; and, we are sorry to say it, there is no surfeit so easily to be produced. We wish, therefore, that our prayers, whether printed or extemporary, had less of this mark of heathenism. Care should, likewise, be taken to avoid abrupt and unnatural transitions. There should be, if possible, an unbroken unity in every prayer—something answering to the key-note in music, which should never be violated. It is to a strict observance of this rule, as well as the preceding, that the prayers in the English liturgy owe one of their principal excellencies. To this, also, we are to refer the amazing power of

the *litanies* in the English and Catholic churches. It would be well if all our congregational prayers partook more of this character. Where the same feeling is continually addressed and acted on, for a long time, it cannot but yield even in the hardest and coldest hearts. Unnecessary pains are taken, as it seems to us, to multiply occasional prayers. We can conceive of no reason, why a man should pray any differently in the summer, from what he does in the winter; and yet in almost all our collections we have particular prayers for the different seasons. So, too, we have 'A Prayer for one that deliberates about Marriage,'* and one 'For a New Married Party.'† No doubt a man may feel very devout on such occasions, and have something very peculiar to say. But we still think, that as they are occasions not likely to occur more than five or six times in the course of a man's life, it might safely be left to his ingenuity, at the time, to get up something, that would answer the purpose. 'Ejaculations for Sick and Dying Persons,'‡ in a printed book, are absolutely preposterous.

When we apply the preceding rules and observations to the Family Prayer Book, the title of which we have prefixed to this article, it stands the test remarkably well. We are glad that encouragement has been afforded for issuing a second edition of this useful work; and that the writer has availed himself of the opportunity to make some very judicious corrections and improvements upon the first. Almost every page bears the marks of a careful and thorough revision. Some inaccuracies of expression, and a few rather striking violations of good taste, which found a place in the former edition, probably from haste of composition, have all been attended to; and care has also been taken to prune away a redundancy of epithet, and, in general, to make the language more simple, and the petitions themselves more natural and affecting. Three additional prayers have, also, been inserted, one of which, 'For a Person in Active Business,' is particularly edifying. The uncommon neatness and correctness of the typography is, likewise, a consideration by no means unworthy of notice among the circumstances enhancing the value of this edition. In fine, both as to its substance and form, it is a work of an excellent design, and well calculated to answer its design; and considering how much it is wanted amongst us, and how much good it may do, we are happy in having this opportunity to recommend it most cordially.

* New Manual. † Jay's Prayers. ‡ New Manual.

ARTICLE XIII.

1. *Translation of the Cena Upanishad, one of the chapters of the Sama Veda; according to the gloss of the celebrated Shancaracharya: establishing the unity and the sole omnipotence of the Supreme Being: and that he alone is the object of worship.* By Rammohun Roy. Calcutta: printed by Philip Pereira, at the Hindoostanee Press. 1816.
2. *Remarks on a second appeal to the Christian public*, by Rammohun Roy. Originally published in No. 4. of the friend of India. Serampore: printed at the mission press. 1821.
3. *Humble suggestions to his Countrymen who believe in the one true God:* by Prusunnu Koomar Thakoor. Calcutta. 1823.
4. *Final appeal to the Christian public, in defence of the 'Precepts of Jesus;'* by Rammohun Roy. Calcutta: printed at the Unitarian press, Dhurmtollah. 1823.

The first and last of these works belong to a collection of sixteen publications, which are before us, by the same author. According to the little information which we have been able to gather respecting his history, Rammohun Roy belongs to a Brahmin family of high cast, and was born about the year 1780, in the district of Bordouan near Bengal. He received his education in Patna and Calcutta, from Mohammedan and Brahmin masters, who taught him among other things the logic of Aristotle, the mathematics of Euclid, and the Arabic, Persian and Sanscrit languages. He appears to have removed from his native district soon after the year 1805, to a city called Moorshedabad, about 100 miles north of Calcutta, and to have published there in Persian, with an Arabic preface, a work which we have not seen, entitled, *against the idolatry of all religions.* Since the year 1814 he has resided in Calcutta. Some other particulars relating to him, which are not without interest, are given in the following extract from Fitz-Clarence's *Journal of a Route across India, in the years* 1817 and 1818.

'I became well acquainted with him, and admire his talents and acquirements. His eloquence in our language is very great, and I am told he is still more admirable in Arabic and Persian. It is remarkable, that he has studied and thoroughly understands the politics of Europe, but more particularly those of England; and the last time I was in his company, he argued forcibly against a standing army in a free country, and quoted all the arguments brought forward by the Members of the Opposition. I think that he is in many respects a most extraordinary person. In the first place, he is a religious reformer, who has amongst a people more bigoted than

those of Europe in the middle ages, dared to think for himself. His learning is most extensive, as he is not only conversant with the best books in English, Arabic, Sanscrit, Bengalee and Hindoostanee, but has even studied rhetoric in Arabic and English, and quotes Locke and Bacon on all occasions. He is particularly handsome, not of a very dark complexion, of a fine person, and most courtly manners. He professes to have no objection to eat and live as we do, but refrains from it, in order not to expose himself to the imputation of having changed his religion for the good things of this world. He will sit at table with us while the meat is on it, which no other Brahmin will do.'

The most recent account which we have seen of Rammohun Roy is contained in a letter dated in August last, from the editor of the *Calcutta Journal*, then in London, to the editor of the *Monthly Repository*. It was written in reply to some suspicions concerning Rammohun Roy, which had been expressed by a correspondent of the latter work. The following is an extract.

'In June 1818, the month of my first arrival in Calcutta, I was introduced to Rammohun Roy, and was surprised at the unparalleled accuracy of his language, never having before heard *any* foreigner of Asiatic birth speak so well, and esteeming his fine choice of words as worthy the imitation even of Englishmen. My first hour's conversation with him was in Arabic, that being the oriental language most familiar to me, and not knowing at first that he spoke English with ease and fluency; but accident changing our discourse to English, I was delighted and surprised at his perfection in this tongue. I know, moreover, that he is a profound scholar in Sunskrit, Bengallee, Arabic, Persian, and Hinduee, all of which he writes and speaks with facility. In English, he is competent to converse freely on the most abstruse subjects, and to argue more closely and coherently than most men that I know. His attention has also been lately turned to Hebrew and Greek, for literary purposes, and to French for colloquial intercourse. To represent a man with such acquirements at the age of thirty-five (for he cannot be much more) as deficient in intellect, must either be the work of extreme ignorance, or malice, or both. For myself, I have no hesitation in declaring that I could not name twenty Englishmen in India, whose intellectual endowments I thought even *equal* to his own, although I have come in contact with most of the distinguished men in the country. He is in short one of the wonders of the present age, and requires only to be known, to excite admiration and esteem.

'It is barely possible that some of his earlier works might have been revised by an English pen; but I am convinced that if ever such revisions were made, they must have been *merely* literal. The subject was all his own. And as to his later writings, his controversies with the Missionaries of Serampore, I do not believe that

they have one word in them which is not *wholly* his own. The Missionary converted by Rammohun Roy from Trinitarianism to Unitarianism, is a Mr. Adam, and not Dr. Marshman: which Mr. Adam was originally deputed, it is understood, from the mission at Serampore, to discuss personally with Rammohun Roy the several points of difference between their creeds, and being honestly bent on the search of truth, had the frankness to confess the arguments of his opponent to be convincing. Mr. Adam accordingly separated from the Baptist Mission at Serampore, and in conjunction with Rammohun Roy, and others of the same faith, established a Unitarian Chapel and an Unitarian Press in Calcutta. The late Bishop of Calcutta, on hearing of Mr. Adam's embracing Unitarianism, applied to the Advocate-General, Mr. Spankie, to know if it would not be possible to have Mr. Adam banished for preaching this *heresy*, in a land where idolaters, widow-burners, and slayers of human sacrifices, are allowed to preach their degrading doctrines and practise their abominable rites with impunity! Mr. Spankie then replied that by the law as it applied to India, any man might be banished for any thing which the Governor-General might deem sufficient cause: but he thought the day was past when it would be safe to banish a man for his opinions on religion, and there the matter ended.

'If Rammohun Roy had been the wretch which the friend of T. L. supposes, he might have had abundant opportunities of receiving rewards from the Indian Government, in the shape of offices and appointments, for his mere neutrality; but being as remarkable for his integrity as he is for his attainments, he has, during the five years that I have known him, and that too most intimately and confidentially, pursued his arduous task of endeavouring to improve his countrymen, to beat down superstition, and to hasten as much as possible those reforms in the religion and government of his native land, of which both stand in almost equal need. He has done all this, to the great detriment of his private interests, being rewarded by the coldness and jealousy of all the great functionaries of Church and State in India, and supporting the Unitarian Chapel, the Unitarian Press, and the expense of his own publications, besides other charitable acts, out of a private fortune, of which he devotes more than one-third to acts of the purest philanthropy and benevolence.

'I am ready to meet any man living and confirm verbally what I here commit to writing for your use; for nothing will delight me more than to do justice to one whom I honour and esteem as I do this excellent Indian Christian and Philosopher.'

The subjects of those writings of Rammohun Roy which we have seen, are the laws concerning Hindoo women, and the Hindoo and Christian theologies. The first of his publications on the former subject, issued in 1818, is called *a translation of a conference between an advocate and an opponent of the practice of burning widows alive, from the original Bungla.* The author ad-

mits that some of the Hindoo sacred books speak favourably of this practice; but he argues that they only encourage it by the promise of the enjoyments of Heaven for a limited time; and that they only intend to recommend it to such as are incapable of living in widowhood, seclusion, and the practice of austerities; which latter he shows to be the course prescribed in the institutes of Menoo, and other books of the highest authority, and to be recommended there by the promise of the highest future reward of all, no less than that of deliverance from the female form, and absorption into Brahma. If there is really a clashing of authorities, he maintains that of the two courses, inconsistent with one another, which are enjoined, that is to be preferred which rests on the highest authority, and is assured of the amplest reward. To a quotation by the *advocate* of a text from one of the Vedas, Rammohun Roy in the person of the *opponent* gives a reply, which shows the Hopkinsian doctrine of perfect disinterestedness to be also a tenet of Brahminical theology. He affirms that self-immolation is to be reckoned one of those rites which according to the following texts among others, are divested of the highest quality of merit by being performed with a view to reward. 'All those ignorant persons who attach themselves to the words of the Veds that convey promises of fruition, consider those falsely alluring passages as leading to real happiness, and say that besides them there is no other reality. Agitated in their minds by these desires, they believe the abodes of the celestial gods to be the chief object; and they devote themselves to those texts which treat of ceremonies and their fruits, and entice by promises of enjoyment. Such people can have no real confidence in the Supreme Being.' 'All those who perform acts to procure gratifications may enjoy Heaven like the Gods; and he who performs acts free from desires, procures release from the five elements of the body; that is, obtains absorption.' Another branch of the argument is that the practice, as it exists in Bengal, is wholly destitute of authority; for it is essential to a rite to be performed with a circumstantial observance of the rule, but the rule requires that a widow shall enter the flame in which the body of her husband is consuming, while the practice is for her to be fastened on the pile before it is kindled.

His *second conference*, &c. published in 1820, is not only more elaborate both as to learning and argument, but maintains the cause of humanity with great earnestness and force, and contains a just estimate of female character and claims which is in nothing exceeded even by their distinguished advocate in the *epistles on women*. No new leading points are here introduced into the

controversy, and its details are not of a nature to interest our readers.

In 1822, Rammohun Roy published *brief remarks regarding modern encroachments on the ancient rights of females, according to the Hindoo law of inheritance.* This law had it seems been so interpreted by the Brahmin advisers of the British courts, as in most cases to leave the widows and daughters of a deceased Hindoo dependent on his sons. Rammohun Roy shows by various citations from the ancient law, that it secures to such persons a competent provision; and comments forcibly on the injustice of the modern exposition. 'It is not,' he says, 'from religious prejudices and early impressions only, that Hindoo widows burn themselves on the piles of their deceased husbands, but also from their witnessing the distress in which widows of the same rank are involved, and the insults and slights to which they are daily subjected, that they become in a great measure regardless of existence after the death of their husbands; and this indifference, accompanied with the hope of future reward held out to them, leads them to the horrible act of suicide.' A highly important part of the same publication is that in which the author shows that the practice of polygamy, as it exists among his countrymen, is contrary to the sense of their sacred books.

These are excellent services to humanity, and rank the mind of their author among those, which, from time to time, a kind providence arms for the holy war against that unskilful reasoning which is every where the champion of so much pernicious conduct. It is peculiar neither to Pagan nor to Christian countries to be infested with weak-minded men, who, in their assuming narrowness interpreting the letter of some fragments of their rule so as to contradict the letter of almost all of it, and the spirit of the whole, with all honesty and singleness of mind uphold folly and sin as matters of religion and conscience. Philanthropy has a hard task enough to traverse the schemes of the profligate when disguised under the gravity of the devotee. But she has no work so delicate, unpromising, and thankless, as that of reforming the abuses of a zeal not according to knowledge. It will not be instructed, for it consecrates its errors, and dreads deliberation as next of kin to instability and defection; and it can with difficulty be resisted, for sincerity even in a bad cause commands a certain sort of respect and forbearance, and creates a favourable prejudice in such as cannot understand the merits of the question. For endeavouring to correct a mistake which sustains the most detestable enormity, Rammohun Roy is accounted by the scrupulous religionists of his country as an impious innovator, who would exalt reason above faith; but this is no other price

than those must prepare themselves to pay, who meditate rendering the best services to society by disabusing it of cherished superstitions.

In 1816, Rammohun Roy published *a translation of the Cena Upanishad, one of the chapters of the Sama Veda; according to the gloss of the celebrated Shancaracharya: establishing the unity and the sole omnipotence of the Supreme Being; and that He alone is the object of worship.* The following extract from the preface explains the purpose for which this and his other translations were prepared.

'It is with no ordinary feeling of satisfaction that I have already seen many respectable persons of my countrymen, to the great disappointment of their interested spiritual guides, rise superior to their original prejudices, and enquire into the truths of religion. As many European gentlemen, especially those who interest themselves in the improvement of their fellow-creatures, may be gratified with a view of the doctrines of the original work, it appeared to me, that I might best contribute to that gratification, by translating a few chapters of the Véd into the English language, which I have accordingly done, and now submit them to their candid judgment. Such benevolent people will, perhaps, rise from a perusal of them, with the conviction, that in the most ancient times the inhabitants of this part of the globe (at least the more intelligent class) were not unacquainted with metaphysical subjects; that allegorical language, or description, was very frequently employed, to represent the attributes of the Creator, which were sometimes designated as independent existences; and that, however suitable this method might be to the refined understandings of men of learning, it had the most mischievous effect, when literature and philosophy decayed, producing all those absurdities and idolatrous notions, which have checked, or rather destroyed, every mark of reason, and darkened every beam of understanding.

'The Véd, from which all Hindoo literature is derived, is, in the opinion of the Hindoos, an inspired work, coeval with the existence of the world. It is divided into four parts, viz. Rig, Yajur, Sam, and At'harva, these are again divided into several branches, and these last are subdivided into chapters. It is the general characteristic of each Véd, that the primary chapters of each branch treat of astronomy, medicine, arms, and other arts and sciences. They also exhibit allegorical representations of the attributes of the Supreme Being, by means of earthly objects, animate or inanimate, whose shapes or properties are analogous to the nature of those attributes, and pointing out the modes of their worship, immediately, or through the medium of fire. In the subsequent chapters, the unity of the Supreme Being, as the sole Ruler of the Universe, is plainly inculcated, and the mode of worshipping him particularly directed. The doctrine of a plurality of Gods and Goddesses laid down in the pre-

ceding chapters, is not only controverted, but reasons assigned for its introduction; for instance, that the worship of the Sun and Fire, together with the whole allegorical system, were only inculcated for the sake of those, whose limited understandings rendered them incapable of comprehending and adoring the invisible Supreme Being; so that such persons might not remain in a brutified state, destitute of all religious principles.'

This publication led to some remarks printed in Madras and Calcutta, to which Rammohun Roy replied in *a defence of Hindoo Theism in reply to the attack of an advocate for idolatry, at Madras;* and *a second defence of the Monotheistical system of the Véds, in reply to an apology for the present state of Hindoo worship.* These writings occupy a narrow ground of controversy. The Madras *Advocate* admits, that 'the worship of the all-pervading and Supreme Being is the original doctrine founded on the Védas, Purans, &c.' and that 'the Vedas, Purans, &c. say that this Being is infinite, eternal, self-intelligent, indivisible, inconsumable, pervading, universal, inconceivable, invisible, unalterable and almighty;' but maintains that the worship of his attributes, 'under various representations, by means of consecrated objects, is prescribed by the scripture to the human race by way of mental exercise, who, owing to the waving nature of their minds, cannot, without assistance, fix their thoughts on the incomprehensible and Almighty Being.' In like manner the Calcutta *Apologist* allows, that 'faith in *the Supreme Being* when united with moral works, leads men to eternal happiness,' yet argues that 'the worship of a favoured deity and that of an image, are also considered to be acts of morality;' that 'the adoration of 330,000,000 deities, especially the principal ones, such as Siva, Vishnu, Kali, Gunesh, the Sun and others, through their several images, has been enjoined by the Shastras,' and that 'to those it is enjoined, who from a defective understanding, do not perceive that God exists in every thing, that they should worship him through the medium of some created object.' Rammohun Roy, on the other hand, maintains that he has 'proved by their [the Shastras,] own authority, that this [idol worship] was merely a concession made to the limited faculties of the vulgar, with the view of remedying in some degree, the misfortune of their being incapable of comprehending and adopting the spiritual worship of the true God.' He denies that 'the different religious acts prescribed by the Shastras to the different classes of Hindoos respectively, are necessary to attain divine faith, or that they are indispensable accompaniments of holy knowledge;' and 'cannot admit that the worship of these attributes under various representations by means of consecrated objects, has been prescribed by

the Ved to the human race, as this kind of worship of consecrated objects is enjoined by the Shastras to those only, who are incapable of raising their minds to the notion of an invisible Supreme Being.' To establish this point he makes copious citations from the Hindoo sacred books, and incidentally remarks with equal spirit and good sense upon the absurdity and mischiefs of idolatry.

These publications were followed in 1818 by a *Translation of an abridgment of the Vedant, or resolution of all the Veds; the most celebrated and revered work of Brahminical Theology; establishing the Unity of the Supreme Being; and that he alone is the object of propitiation and worship;* in 1819, by a *translation of the Moonduk-Opunishud;* and at a date not given, but more recent (as we find by the preface) by a *translation of the Kuth-Opunishud*, chapters of the Veda. The great point urged by Rammohun Roy, that the theology of the Vedas is the doctrine of one self-existent, omnipotent God, may be regarded as established, since, as we have seen, it is conceded by his opponents; but we are by no means equally satisfied, that the idolatry of the Hindoos has not abundant authority in the more modern at least of their sacred books. The truth seems to be that their religion only differs from those of other nations, which have pursued for ages the downward path of heathenism, in still retaining in its records some of the materials which were furnished by the pure theology of a primitive antiquity. The Hindoos, like other nations, from fanciful personifications advanced to actual deification of the attributes of God, and from aiding their conceptions of him by means of images, came to make these images the ultimate object of their religious regard. The errors with which the mind infatuates and perverts itself when once it has entered on this course, make up the entire systems of other Pagans who possess no records of a high antiquity; and the later Hindoo religious books, at least, are also deeply tinctured with them. But such conceptions as the following savour of a source more remote and pure.

'No vision can approach him; no language can describe him; no intellectual power can compass or determine him. We know nothing of how the Supreme Being should be explained: He is beyond all that is within the reach of comprehension, and also beyond nature, which is above conception. Our ancient *spiritual parents* have thus explained him to us.

'He alone, who has never been described by language, and who directs language *to its meaning*, is the Supreme Being; and not any specified thing which men worship: Know THOU this.

'He alone, whom understanding cannot comprehend, and who, as said *by learned men*, knows the real nature of understanding, is the

Supreme Being; and not any specified thing which men worship: Know Thou this;

'He alone, whom no man can conceive by vision, and by whose superintendance every one perceives the objects of vision, is the Supreme Being; and not any specified thing which men worship.'

'He from whom the universal world proceeds, who is the Lord of the universe, and he whose work is the universe, is the Supreme Being.

'Breath, the intellectual power, all the internal and external senses, the void space, air, light, water and the extensive earth, proceeded from the Supreme Being.

'God is indeed one, and has no second.' 'There is none but the Supreme Being possessed of universal knowledge.' 'He, who is without any figure, and beyond the limit of description, is the Supreme Being.'

'That true Being was before all.' 'The Supreme Being has no feet, but extends every where; has no hands, yet holds every thing; has no eyes, yet sees all that is; has no ears, yet hears every thing that passes.' 'His existence had no cause.'

'None but the Supreme Being is to be worshipped; nothing excepting him should be adored by a wise man.'

'To God we should approach, of him we should hear, of him we should think, and to him we should attempt to approximate.'

'That Supreme Being *who is the subject of the superior learning* is beyond the apprehension of the senses, and out of the reach of the corporeal organs of action; and is without origin, colour or magnitude; and has neither eye nor ear, nor has he hand or foot. He is everlasting, all pervading, omnipresent, absolutely incorporeal, unchangeable; and it is he whom wise men consider as the origin of the universe.'

'He is immortal and without form or figure, omnipresent, pervading external and internal objects, unborn, without breath or individual mind, pure and superior to eminently exalted nature.

'From him the first sensitive particle or the seed of the universe, individual intellect, all the senses and their *objects*, also vacuum, air, light, water and the earth which contains all things, proceed.

'God as being resplendent and most proximate "*to all creatures*," is styled the operator in the heart; he is great and all sustaining; for on him rest all existences, such as those that move, those that breathe, those that twinkle and those that do not. Such is God. You all contemplate him, as the support of all objects visible and invisible, the chief end *of human pursuit.* He surpasses all human understanding and is the most pre-eminent.'

'Consider the soul as a rider, the body as a car, the intellect its driver, the mind as its rein: The external senses are called the horses, restrained by the mind; external objects are the roads: So

wise men believe the soul united with the body, the senses and the mind, to be the partaker *of the consequences of good or evil acts.*

'If that intellect, *which is represented as the driver*, be indiscreet, and the rein of the mind loose, all the senses *under the authority of the intellectual power* become unmanageable; like wicked horses under the control of an *unfit* driver.

'If the intellect be discreet and the rein of the mind firm, all the senses prove steady and manageable; like good horses under an excellent driver.

'He, who has not a prudent intellect and steady mind, and who consequently lives always impure, cannot arrive at the divine glory, but descends to the world.

'He who has a prudent intellect and steady mind, and consequently lives always pure, attains that glory from whence he never will descend.'

Some of the works which we have mentioned, were gratuitously distributed by Rammohun Roy among his countrymen, in Hindoostanee and Bengalee translations. The following extract from the preface to the last of them contains some information as to the effect which they produced, as well as to the state of his own mind at the latest period before he appears to have given particular attention to christianity.

'A great body of my countrymen possessed of good understandings, and not much fettered with prejudices, being perfectly satisfied with the truth of the doctrines contained in this and in other works already laid by me before them, and of the gross errors of the puerile system of idol worship which they were led to follow, have altered their religious conduct in a manner becoming the dignity of human beings; while the advocates of idolatry and their misguided followers, over whose opinions prejudice and obstinacy prevail more than good sense and judgment, prefer custom and fashion to the authorities of their Scriptures; and therefore continue under the form of religious devotion, to practise a system, which destroys, to the utmost degree, the natural texture of society, and prescribes crimes of the most heinous nature, which even the most savage nations would blush to commit, unless compelled by the most urgent necessity. I am however not without a sanguine hope that through divine Providence and human exertions, they will sooner or later avail themselves of that true system of Religion, which leads its observers to a knowledge and love of God and to a friendly inclination towards their fellow-creatures; impressing their hearts at the same time, with humility and charity, accompanied by independence of mind and pure sincerity. Contrary to the code of idolatry, this system defines sins as evil thoughts proceeding from the heart, quite unconnected with observances as to diet and other matters of form. At any rate it seems to me that I cannot better employ my time than in an endeavour to illustrate and maintain truth, and to render ser-

vice to my fellow-labourers, confiding in the mercy of that Being to whom the motives of our actions and secrets of our hearts are well known.'

So honest, enlightened and benevolent an inquirer could not fail to be attracted by the pretensions of the Gospel, presented as it was to his notice, as the religion of the rulers of his country. The first evidence of its having engaged his particular attention, is furnished by a little volume published in 1820, called, '*The precepts of Jesus, the guide to peace and happiness; extracted from the books of the New Testament, ascribed to the four Evangelists, with translations into Sungscrit and Bengalee.*' It is a collection of the most remarkable discourses of our Lord, separated from the relations of his miracles. The following account of his design extracted from the preface leaves it uncertain whether Rammohun Roy was yet a believer in the reality of the miracles of the New Testament.

'Historical and some other passages are liable to the doubts and disputes of free-thinkers and antichristians, especially miraculous relations, which are much less wonderful than the fabricated tales handed down to the natives of Asia, and consequently would be apt at best to carry little weight with them.—On the contrary moral doctrines, tending evidently to the maintenance of the peace and harmony of mankind at large, are beyond the reach of metaphysical perversion, and intelligible alike to the learned and to the unlearned.—This simple code of Religion and morality is so admirably calculated to elevate men's ideas to high and liberal notions of one God, who has equally subjected all living creatures, without distinction of cast, rank, or wealth, to change, disappointment, pain, and death; and has equally admitted all to be partakers of the bountiful mercies which he has lavished over nature: and is also so well fitted to regulate the conduct of the human race in the discharge of their various duties to God, to themselves, and to Society, that I cannot but hope the best effects from its promulgation in the present form.'

Some remarks upon this publication soon appeared in a periodical work, called, 'The Friend of India.' The author, 'a Christian missionary,' controverted the position that the precepts of Jesus are alone a guide to peace and happiness. He maintained that 'there are two important points, a knowledge of which is not to be acquired by following the moral precepts of Christ, but which are essential to the attainment of true peace of mind; they being entirely founded upon the dogmas and histories, viz.: how to obtain, 1st, the forgiveness of sins, and the favour of God; and 2dly, strength to overcome human passions, and to keep the commandments of God.' Rammohun Roy replied in *an appeal to the Christian public in defence of*

the precepts of Jesus. In this work he maintains the disputed proposition on the ground of such texts as these; 'on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets;' 'this do and thou shalt live;' 'if ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love,' &c. This part of his argument we cannot but regard as unsuccessful. No doubt, religious obedience is the one thing needful, and the precepts of Jesus Christ are the great rule of that obedience. But in order duly to obey them, we must needs know that they are the *revealed will of God*, a fact, proved by the *miracles* of our Lord; and we must be influenced by those motives to obedience, which are only furnished by the *doctrines* of his religion. In his management of this part of the controversy, we suppose that Rammohun Roy was influenced by a belief not yet discarded, that doctrines, suited less to enforce obedience than to create incredulity, were comprehended in the christian system. We think he would now write somewhat differently, and if he should still think it necessary to present in the first place to his countrymen the preceptive, disconnected from the historical and doctrinal parts of the New Testament, he would do it for the other reason thus stated in his work.

'The Compiler, residing in the same spot where European missionary Gentlemen and others for a period of upwards of twenty years have been, with a view to promote Christianity, distributing in vain amongst the natives numberless copies of the complete Bible, written in different languages, could not be altogether ignorant of the causes of their disappointment. He however never doubted their zeal for the promulgation of Christianity, nor the accuracy of their statement with regard to immense sums of money being annually expended in preparing vast numbers of copies of the Scriptures; but he has seen with regret, that they have completely counteracted their own benevolent efforts, by introducing all the dogmas and mysteries taught in Christian Churches to people by no means prepared to receive them; and that they have been so incautious and inconsiderate in their attempts to enlighten the natives of India, as to address their instructions to them in the same way, as if they were reasoning with persons brought up in a Christian country, with those dogmatical notions imbibed from their infancy. The consequence has been, that the natives in general, instead of benefiting by the perusal of the Bible, copies of which they always receive gratuitously, exchange them very often for blank paper; and generally use several of the dogmatical terms in their native language as a mark of slight in an irreverent manner; the mention of which is repugnant to my feelings. Sabat, an eminently learned but grossly unprincipled Arab, whom our divines supposed that they had converted to Christianity, and whom they of course instructed in all the dogmas and doctrines, wrote a few years

ago a treatise in Arabic against those very dogmas, and printed himself and published several hundred copies of this work; and another Moosulman, of the name of Ena'et Ahmud, a man of respectable family, who is still alive, speedily returned to Mohummudanism from Christianity, pleading that he had not been able to reconcile to his understanding certain dogmas which were imparted to him. It has been owing to their beginning with the introduction of mysterious dogmas, and of relations that at first sight appear incredible, that notwithstanding every exertion on the part of our divines, I am not aware that we can find a single respectable Moosulman or Hindoo, who were not in want of the common comforts of life, once glorified with the truth of Christianity, constantly adhering to it. Of the few hundred natives who have been nominally converted to Christianity, and who have been generally of the most ignorant class, there is ground to suspect that the greater number have been allured to change their faith by other attractions than by a conviction of the truth and reasonableness of those dogmas; as we find nearly all of them are employed or fed by their spiritual teachers, and in case of neglect are apt to manifest a rebellious spirit;—a circumstance which is well known to the Compiler from several local facts, as well as from the following occurrence. About three years ago, the Compiler, on his visit to an English Gentleman, who is still residing in the vicinity of Calcutta, saw a great number of Christian converts with a petition, which they intended to present to the highest Ecclesiastical authority, stating that their teachers, through false promises of advancement, had induced them to give up their ancient religion. The Compiler felt indignant at their presumption, and suggested to the gentleman as a friend, the propriety of not countenancing a set of men, who, from their own declaration, seemed so unprincipled. The Missionaries themselves are as well aware as the Compiler, that those very dogmas are the points which the people always select as the most proper for attack, both in their oral and written controversies with Christian teachers; all of which, if required, the Compiler is prepared to prove by the most unquestionable testimony.

'Under these circumstances the Compiler published such sayings of Christ, as he thought intelligible to all, conveying conviction with them, and best calculated to lead mankind to universal love and harmony.'

A reply to this treatise soon appeared in 'The Friend of India,' the object of which was to show, '1st, the truth and excellency of the miraculous relations, and of the dogmas found in the Scriptural writings; and, 2dly, the insufficiency of the compiled precepts of Jesus alone to lead to salvation, unless accompanied with the important doctrines of the Godhead of Jesus and his atonement.' This led to *a second Appeal to the christian public, in defence of the precepts of Jesus, by Rammohun Roy.*

In this treatise he maintained by similar arguments to those which he had used before, 'that the precepts compiled and published as a guide to peace and happiness, though deficient in respect to speculative doctrines and creeds, as well as narrative, yet contain all that is essential in practical christianity.' He reminds his oppenent, however, that he had 'neither in his introduction to the precepts of Jesus, nor in the defence of those precepts, expressed the least doubt as to the truth of any part of the Gospels.' 'Had not experience,' he says, 'too clearly proved that metaphorical expressions, when taken singly, and without attention to their contexts, may be made the foundation of doctrines quite at variance with the rest of the scriptures, I should have had no hesitation in submitting indiscriminately the whole of the doctrines of the New Testament to my countrymen;' and he approximates his main proposition to truth by the following important qualifications.

'It is however evident, that the human race are naturally so weak, and so prone to be led astray by temptations of temporary gratifications, that the best and wisest of them fall far short of manifesting a strict obedience to the divine commandments, and are constantly neglecting the duty they owe to the Creator and to their fellow-creatures; nevertheless, in reliance on numerous *promises found in the sacred writings*, we ought to entertain every hope of enjoying the blessings of pardon from the merciful Father through repentance, *which is declared the only means of procuring forgiveness of our failures.*'

The principal part of the work, however, is taken up in controverting the second point of his reviewer, and proving that the doctrines of the Trinity, and of the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus, are no doctrines of the Bible. 'Disgusted' says he, 'with the puerile and unsociable system of Hindoo idolatry, and dissatisfied at the cruelty allowed by Moossulmanism against Non-moossulmans, I, on my searching after the truth of Christianity, felt for a length of time very much perplexed with the difference of sentiments found among the followers of Christ, (I mean Trinitarians and Unitarians, the grand divisions of them,) until I met with the explanation of the unity given by the divine teacher himself;' (viz. John xvii. 11.) In the course of his argument to prove that Unitarianism is the doctrine of the Gospel, he shews some acquaintance with ecclesiastical history, and the Hebrew and Greek languages; and an extensive familiarity with the language of scripture. The arguments, though urged with no common clearness and force, are for the most part such as are familiar to persons versed in the Unitarian controversy. The following answer is given to the argument for the proper deity of Christ drawn from the form of baptism.

'The last position is, that Jesus associated his own name with that of God in the rite of baptism, intended to remain in force to the end of the world, and ordained by the passage, *Matthew* xxviii. 19, "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." A profession of belief in God is unquestionably common to all the religions supposed to have been founded upon the authority of the Old Testament; but each is distinguished from the other by a public profession of faith in their respective founders, expressing such profession in a language that may clearly exhibit the inferior nature of those founders to the divine Being, of whom they declare themselves the messengers. This system has been carried on from the first, and was no doubt intended to serve as a perpetual distinguishing mark of faith. The Jews claim that they have a revelation, rendering a belief not in God alone, but in Moses also, incumbent upon them. *Exodus* xiv. 31, "The people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses." But the term "his servant Moses," in this passage, suffices to prove the subordination of Moses, though declared, equally with God, to be an object of their belief. In like manner Mohummudans, in the first acknowledgment of that system of religion, are directed to profess faith in God, and also in Mohummud, his messenger, in the following form: "There is no God except the true God, Mohummud is his messenger." The term "his messenger" removes every doubt of Mohummud's identity or equality with God; so the epithet "Son" found in the passage, "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, &c." ought to be understood and admitted by every one as expressing the created nature of Christ, though the most highly exalted among all creatures. If baptism were administered to one embracing Christianity in the name of the Father and the Holy Ghost, he would thereby no more become enrolled as a Christian, than as a Jew or as a Mohummudan; for both of them, in common with Christians, would readily submit to be baptized in the name of God and his prevailing influence over the universe. But as Christianity requires peculiarly a faith in Jesus, as the promised Messiah, the gracious Saviour enjoins baptism in the name of *the Son* also, so as to distinguish his happy followers from the Jews and the rest of the people. A mere association of names in divine commandments therefore never can be considered as tending to prove identity or equality between the subjects of those names:—such junction of names is found frequently in the sacred writings without establishing unity among the persons whom those names imply.'

Some texts from the Koran are subjoined, which, as Rammohun Roy maintains, would have led the Mohammedans, if they had been no better interpreters of language, than some Christians, to believe that their prophet laid claim to eternal existence and proper deity: such as, 'I was the first of all prophets in

creation, and the last in appearance.' 'I was a prophet when Adam was in earth and water.' 'He who has seen me, has seen God.' 'He who has obeyed me, has obeyed God; and he who has sinned against me, has sinned against God.'

During the same year (1821) Rammohun Roy published three numbers of the Brahminical Magazine. The two first contained a notice of an attack upon the Hindoo faith issued from the Baptist mission press at Serampore. In the second is introduced the following close *argumentum ad hominem.*

'With a view to prove the errors of the Poorans and Tuntrus you say that the Poorans represent God as possessed of various names, and forms, as possessed of wife and children, and as subject to the senses, and to the discharge of bodily functions; from which it follows that there are many Gods, that they are subject to sensual pleasure, and that the omnipresence of God cannot be maintained. I therefore humbly ask the missionary gentlemen whether or not they call Jesus Christ, who is possessed of the human form, and also the Holy Ghost, who is possessed of the dove shape, the very God? and whether they do not consider that Jesus Christ, the very God, received impressions by the external organs, eyes, &c. and operated by means of the active organs, hands, &c. And whether or not they consider him as subject to all the human passions? Was he angry or not? Was his mind afflicted or not? Did he experience any suffering or pain? And did he not eat and drink? Did he not live a long time with his own mother, brothers and relations? Was he not born and did he not die? And did not the Holy Ghost, who is very God, in the form of a dove remove from one place to another? If they acknowledge all this, then they cannot find fault with the Poorans, alleging that in them the names and the forms of God are established, and that according to them God must be considered as subject to the senses, and as possessing senses and organs, and that God must be considered as having a wife and child, and as not possessed of omnipresence on account of his having a form. Because all these errors, viz. the plurality of Gods, their sensual indulgence, and their locality, are applicable to themselves in a complete degree. To say that every thing, however contrary to the laws of nature is possible with God, will equally afford a pretence to Missionaries and Hindoos in support of their respective incarnations. The aged Vyas has spoken truth in the Muhabharut. "O! king, a person sees the faults of another although they are like the grains of mustard seed, but although his own faults are as big as the Bel fruit, seeing them he cannot see them." Moreover the Poorans say, that the names, forms and sensual indulgence of God, which we have mentioned, are fictitious, and we have so spoken with a view to engage the minds of persons of weak understanding, but the missionary gentlemen say that the account which is given in the Bible of the names, forms and sensual indulgence of God is real. Therefore the plurality of

Gods, their locality and subjection to sensual indulgence are faults to be found in a real sense only in the system of the missionary gentlemen.'

The number closes with an inquiry, how certain apparent contradictions involved in the doctrine of the Trinity are capable of being reconciled. In reply, it seems, the common attempts at explanation were made on the part of the missionaries, and in his third number Rammohun Roy pursues at considerable length the argument upon the absurdity and incredibility of that doctrine. 'Even idolaters,' says he, 'among Hindoos, have more plausible excuses for their polytheism. I shall be obliged, if the Editor can shew that the polytheistical doctrines, maintained by Hindoos, are in any degree, more unreasonable than his own If not, he will not, I trust, endeavour in future to introduce among them one set of polytheistical sentiments as a substitute for another set: *both of them* being *equally* and *solely* protected by the *shield of mystery*.'

We do not know that the Brahminical Magazine has been continued. The republication from 'The Friend of India,' of *Remarks on a second Appeal to the Christian public*, a pamphlet of 128 closely printed octavo pages, led to Rammohun Roy's *Final Appeal*, the preface to which is dated in January last. In an edition of the former work which has been printed in England, it is ascribed on the title page to Dr. Marshman. It consists of two chapters, in which is exhibited the supposed scriptural evidence; 1st, for the vicarious sacrifice; and, 2dly, for the deity of Jesus Christ. The proofs of these doctrines are chiefly selected from the Pentateuch, the Psalms, and the Prophets. We have no wish to speak otherwise than respectfully of Dr. Marshman; but it would be only affectation, not to say that it is a mere problem to us, that a man of the most moderate understanding should be willing to publish such a work, or that even under the strongest conceivable sectarian bias, his friends can tolerate the rendering of such reasons. He finds the doctrine of the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus in the promise to Abraham; 'in thee, shall all the families of the earth be blessed;' in David's words; 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption;' in the text of Ezekiel; 'I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David, and he shall be their shepherd;' and of Habakkuk, 'the just shall live by faith.' The deity of Christ he demonstrates thus: 'They are termed blessed who trust in him.' Jeremiah however declares, 'Thus saith Jehovah, Cursed be he that trusteth in man,' &c. If then it be cursed to trust in man, but blessed to trust in the Son, he is God

over all, blessed for ever more.' The same doctrine he finds in the words of the 95th Psalm; 'O come, let us worship and bow down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker;' of Jeremiah; 'Fear ye not me? saith Jehovah; Will ye not tremble at my presence, who have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass it?' and of Hosea; 'afterwards shall Israel return and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king.' To a question of his opponent, 'on what principle any stress can be laid in defence of Christ's Deity on the prophetic expression quoted Heb. i. from the Psalms,' he replies, 'merely on this principle, that it is spoken by GOD WHO CANNOT LIE.' He argues the eternal existence of our Saviour, from the eighth verse of this chapter, and when called on to prove that the words there found denote eternal existence, he argues that they can mean no less, since they are addressed to our Lord, who is an eternal Being. He seems to suppose that he is proving the doctrine of satisfaction, by adducing texts which 'describe Christ's kingdom' and 'foretell the coming of the Redeemer.' Rammohun Roy had argued against this doctrine on the ground of its inconsistency with the divine justice. Dr. Marshman meets his argument by quoting the text of Isaiah, in which it is declared that the Saviour foretold, shall be made 'of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord;' and inquiring, 'does the fear of the Lord lead to acts of palpable iniquity, or did the spirit of the Lord fail to do his office?' He infers the Deity of the Messiah from his being called, 'Jehovah our Righteousness,' in the 23d chapter of Jeremiah; and, when reminded that Jerusalem is called by the same name, in another chapter of the same prophet, he replies 'it is the church of Christ, the holy Jerusalem, who bears this name to the honour of her glorious head and husband.' 'If the church be really Christ's spouse, it is not strange that her Lord should permit her to bear his name.'

How lively must be the imaginations of those who can expect that any thing will be done, by way of converting a sensible people, by force of such reasoning as this! How are we to wonder that the Baptists are spending their thousands for nought, when there is not a Brahmin boy in his elements, but has logic enough to see through the immense chasm between Dr. Marshman's premises and conclusions? We blush for the discredit into which our glorious faith is brought, when we picture to ourselves a well informed Hindoo turning over the pages of Dr. Marshman's work, under the idea that they present a just exhibition of the christian system, and of the manner in which its advocates maintain it; and we reflect, with deep concern, upon the probability that the introduction of christianity into India

will prove to be greatly obstructed and delayed, by the prevalence of that contempt for it, which cannot fail to have been thus produced.

But it has pleased God, by an agency little to have been expected, to vindicate his cause from the disgrace it was encountering in the house of its friends. The *Final Appeal* of Rammohun Roy was what was wanted in the exigency. It is not a treatise on the christian system at large, nor even a refutation of the Trinity and its kindred errors by arguments drawn from the various sources, but it is a lucid and learned vindication of the Christian scriptures from the charge of containing such doctrines. Whether we are to ascribe it to unparalleled critical sagacity on the part of the author, or to an industry scarcely less wonderful, which has made him familiar in so short a time with the best European expositors, this work is evidence of a most extensive acquaintance with the true illustration and sense of difficult passages of scripture. It comprises a very valuable commentary on nearly four hundred texts. After the copious extracts which we have given from his other works, we will content ourselves here with two; one of which will be a specimen of the clearness and simplicity of his critical remarks, and the other of the vigour and point of his general reasoning.

'As the Editor and many orthodox Christians, lay much stress on the application of the term Immanuel to Jesus, I offer the following observations. The sum total of their argument is derived from the following verse, Matthew i. 23, "And they shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." This name is composed of three Hebrew words "Emma" עִם with; "noo" נוּ us; "el" אֵל God; that is, with us God; hence the advocates for the trinity conclude that Jesus is here called God, and that he must therefore be God. But let us ascertain whether other beings are not in common with Jesus called by designations compounded with *el* or God in the sacred writings, or whether the *term el* is exclusively applied to Jehovah and Jesus, and then direct our attention to the above stated conclusion: Genesis XXXII. 24. "And Jacob was left alone and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day, (30) And he (Jacob) called the name of the place פְּנִיאֵל Peni*el*, for I have seen *God* face to face, and my life is preserved." Here the place is called the face of *el* (God,) and the angel who wrestled with and blessed Jacob, and whom he saw there, is styled *el* (God.) (verse 28.) "And he (the angel) said thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Isra*el*, for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast *prevailed*." As Jacob, in wrestling with the angel, shewed him his power and prevailed, he was called *Israel*, the prince of God, or properly speaking, the prince of the

angel, for it would be the grossest blasphemy to say that Jacob wrestled with the almighty God, and prevailed over him. So we find in Genesis XLVI. 17. "Malchi*el*," that is, "my king God." Daniel VIII. 16. "Gabri*el*," ("mighty God,") 1 Chron. XV. 18. Jaazi*el*, "strong God." 20. Jehi*el*, "living God." 1 Samuel VIII. 2. "The name of his first born was Joel" that is, Jehovah God.'

'The Editor in common with other trinitarians, conceives that God the Son, equally with God the Father, (according to their mode of expression,) is possessed of the attributes of perfection, such as mercy, justice, righteousness, truth, &c.; yet he represents them so differently as to ascribe to the Father strict justice, or rather vengeance, and to the Son, unlimited mercy and forgiveness; that is, the Father, the first person of the Godhead, having been in wrath at the sinful conduct of his offending creatures, found his mercy so resisted by justice that he could not forgive them at all, through mercy, unless he satisfied his justice by inflicting punishment upon these guilty men; but the Son, the second person of the Godhead, though displeased at the sins of *his offending creatures*, suffered his mercy to overcome justice, and by offering his own blood as an atonement for their sins, he has obtained for them pardon without punishment; and by means of vicarious sacrifice, reconciled them to the Father and satisfied his justice and vengeance. If the justice of the Father did not permit his pardoning sinful creatures, and reconciling them to himself in compliance with his mercy, unless a vicarious sacrifice was made to him for their sins; how was the justice of the Son prevailed upon by his mercy to admit their pardon, and their reconciliation to himself, without any sacrifice, offered to him as an atonement for their sins? It is then evident that according to the system of Trinitarians, the Son had a greater portion of mercy than the Father to oppose to his justice, in having his sinful creatures pardoned, without suffering them to experience individual punishment. Are these the doctrines, on which genuine christianity is founded? God forbid!

'If the first person be acknowledged to be possessed of mercy equally with the second, and that he, through his infinite mercy towards his creatures, sent the second to offer his blood as an atonement for their sins, we must then confess that the mode of the operation and manifestation of mercy by the first is strange and directly opposite to that adopted by the second, who manifested his mercy even by the sacrifice of life, while the first person displayed his mercy only at the death of the second, without subjecting himself to any humiliation or pain.'

Our readers will allow that we have been giving them an account of a very extraordinary man. A radical change of the religious belief in which one has been ducated, is not, under the best advantages, a very common occurrence. It is rendered

more improbable, when the duties of that religion are so blended with all the occupations of life, as to ally in the strongest league the immense powers of habit and prejudice. When an individual owes his consequence to the institutions of the faith in which he has been bred, still less likely will he be to renounce it; and the only remaining chance of converting him, seems to be removed, if the practice of those who profess the belief, which he is invited to embrace, is not such as to give a decidedly favourable impression of its power. 'Why should I become a christian,' said a well-informed Brahmin to a friend of ours? 'I make conscience of my religion, but most of the christians, whom I see, have so little respect for their sacred day as to employ it in all sorts of vice.' To reach the truth, through obstacles like these, is the fortune of no common mind; but to overcome these was the least of the triumphs of the subject of these remarks. He has accomplished the further task of discovering what the christian theology is. He has not been misled as to its nature, as any mind but the most sagacious and independent might be expected to have been, by the misrepresentations of those who pretended to teach it; but has searched for it in its authentic records; and the law and the testimony, to which he has appealed from the erroneous exposition, have given him 'more understanding, than all his teachers.' That not merely a christian convert, but a christian controversialist, fit to be compared with Europeans of the highest name, for learning, penetration, and judgment, should appear in a Hindoo Brahmin, is an event, not only without a parallel, but of a truly surprizing and memorable character. It is an equal attestation to the force of truth, and to the discernment and honesty of the mind which could thus discover and embrace it.

But, remarkable man as we conceive Rammohun Roy to be, we do not regard him as a monster. However eminent above his cotemporaries, no man's habits of thought are formed independently of all surrounding influences, or are radically different from those of his associates. When the leading understandings of an age have carried their light the furthest forward into the recesses of wisdom, there have never been wanting others following close enough behind to apprehend the truths which they have discovered. Nay, the praise of distinguished men is for the most part, that they actually perform that of which others, under similar influences, still fall a little short. Even in the most remarkable discoveries and inventions it is reasonable to allow, that tendencies towards them were in operation at once on many minds, and that if the place of the most active that pressed forward before the rest had been vacant, the object they

accomplished would not have been long delayed. Singular as Rammohun Roy may be, therefore, in the natural endowments of his mind, we do not doubt that his writings are to some extent a specimen of the intellectual culture, which is to be found among other Hindoos of his own rank and similar opportunities of education. Others may not have read so much, or reasoned so well; still others read and reason. And from this persuasion we derive great encouragement. Rammohun Roy explicitly states, what in our last number we had occasion to suggest, that it is of no avail to argue with Hindoos on the absurdity of their polytheism, while the Trinity is at the same time represented as a doctrine of the Christian faith, and attempted to be reconciled with the unity of the Godhead on the self same grounds.

'The Editor denies positively the charge of admitting three Gods, though he is in the practice of worshipping God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. I could wish to know what he would say when a Hindoo also would deny polytheism on the same principle. If three separate persons be admitted to make one God, and those that adore them be esteemed as worshippers of one God, what objection could be advanced justly to the oneness of three hundred and thirty-three million of persons in the Deity, and to their worship in different emblems; for, oneness of three or of thirty millions of separate persons is equally impossible according to human experience, and equally supportable by mystery alone.'

'The Editor expresses his despite of Hindoo polytheism, triumphing in his own pure profession. I wonder how it could escape the notice of the Editor, that the doctrine of plurality in unity maintained by him, and that professed by Hindoos, stand on the same footing; since the Editor, as well as the Hindoos, firmly declares the unity of God, while at the same time both acknowledge the *plurality* of *persons* under the same Godhead, although they differ from each other in the exact number.'

Prepossessed by the unanimous testimony of all who had pressed the Christian faith upon them, with the idea that its theology was similar to their own, it is not strange that they should suppose it to stand on no different authority, and see no reason for considering it. They are now told by one of themselves, that this evasion is founded on a faulty exhibition of Christianity, and that this fact is so certain 'that no one, possessed of merely common sense will fail to find its unscripturality [i. e. the unscripturality of the Trinitarian scheme] after a methodical study of the Old and New Testaments, unless previously impressed in the early part of his life with creeds and forms of speech preparing the way to that doctrine.' This is a representation not likely to be wholly overlooked; for it is made to learned men by a man admired for his learning, an accomplished critic, and especially

possessing that skill in the niceties of oriental language, which cannot but entitle to some confidence an interpreter of the writings of Jews. It is made by a severe reasoner to a class of men, which we will hazard a conjecture cannot furnish among all its Pundits so slovenly a logician as the missionary against whom he argues. It is made to them by a person, who had every motive for aversion to Christianity which could influence them; who once entertained prejudices against it as strong as their own; and who closes his extensive search after truth by declaring, that he enjoys 'the approbation of his conscience in publishing the precepts of this religion as the source of peace and happiness.' We will add, that the truly Christian spirit of benevolence, sincerity and gentleness, which appears in his work, can scarcely fail to excite a prejudice favourable to the faith in defence of which he argues.

We apprehend, then, that the works of Rammohun Roy are not to be regarded merely as trophies of the power of one uncommon individual mind. They are proof to us that, as far as insight into evidence and the capacity of just reasoning goes, there is in the minds of his countrymen of similar rank and education a degree of preparation for Christianity. He has not forsaken the track in which he was placed by the state of sentiment among them; he has only advanced furthest in it; and others, who have been formed under the same discipline, we doubt not, are advancing towards the point, where he has now broken down the barrier that might have repelled, or more probably only delayed them. And it is not merely a supposition of ours, that the notice of the reading community of Hindostan is likely to be attracted towards the new view of Christianity which he has presented. This is ascertained by the third work of which we have prefixed the title to these remarks. It is a brief exhortation, in Bengalee and English, to the different classes of religionists to practice a mutual charity. The author is evidently no polytheist, and founds his morality on the golden rule. The following is his allusion to Protestant and Catholic Trinitarians.

'Amongst Europeans, those who believe Jesus Christ to be God himself, and conceive him to be possessed of a particular form, and maintain Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be one God, should not be treated in an unfriendly manner. On the contrary, we should act towards them in the same manner as we act towards those of our countrymen who, without forming any external image, meditate upon Ram and other supposed incarnations, and believe in their unity.

'Again, those amongst Europeans who believing Jesus Christ to be the Supreme Being, moreover construct various images of him,

should not be hated. On the contrary, it becomes us to act towards those Europeans in the same manner as we act towards such as believe Ram, &c. to be incarnations of God, and form external images of them. For, the religious principles of the two last mentioned sects of foreigners are one and the same with those of the two similar sects among Hindoos, although they are clothed in a different garb.

'When any belonging to the second and third classes of Europeans endeavour to make converts of us, the believers in the only living and true God, even then we should feel no resentment towards them, but rather compassion, on account of their blindness to the errors into which they themselves have fallen. Since it is almost impossible, as every day's experience teaches us, for men, when possessed of wealth and power, to perceive their own defects.'

This is of course the production of a person who has read and can write; and whenever, in any point of view, Christianity and Christians come thus to be publicly discussed, we cannot but think a hopeful beginning is made. In the course of such speculations, the character and claims of our religion cannot fail to be incidentally canvassed. They will insensibly come to be better understood, and make their impression. Their progress may be circuitous, as well as impeded, but at least an entrance may be thus made for them into the minds of the most averse.

We may seem sanguine on this subject, but it certainly is not from any insensibility to the great difficulties which obstruct the introduction of Christianity into India. We understand too well how far the holy spirit of our religion is in advance of the moral state, not only of the purest human society, but of the most excellent individual character, to suppose that it can harmonize, or that it must not have a long and stubborn contest, with the ignorance and vices of the partially civilized community of Hindostan. We remember too well how soon the Greek schoolmen philosophized, and the northern savages secularized it, not to be aware how it is menaced in such a community by rooted superstitions, and low and interested views.* But, on the other hand,

* The difficulty of teaching one of the lower class of Hindoos even to speak like a Christian, and the danger there is that the Trinitarian missionaries may come to confound their mythology with the heathen, are singularly exemplified in a hymn which was written by Krishnu the most eminent of the Baptist converts, and in a translation, supposed to be made by Mr. Ward, missionary to Bengal, was given out by that gentleman to be sung by a Christian society in England in the year 1820. It reads,

'Brumhu for thee a body takes,
Thy guilt assumes, thy fetters breaks,' &c.

The Christian Reformer well remarks on this; 'Christians have hitherto indulged the hope, that the name of the One True God would be great among the Gentiles, but here the matter is reversed, and the name of one of the Hindoo lying vanities is to be great among Christians.'

some of the difficulties appear to us to have been overstated. Much bigotry as there is in Hindostan, there is also much inquisitiveness upon topics of religion. No small variety of sects exists. In the *Humble Suggestions*, &c. four at least are incidentally enumerated, whose members believe in 'one God only without an equal,' and 'endeavour to regulate their conduct by the following precept;' 'He who is desirous of eternal happiness should regard another as he regards himself, and the happiness and misery of another as his own.' We have before us also an authentic account* of a sort of Hindoo Quakers;—a sect which is said to be numerous in the neighbourhood of Delhi. Such instances, even though they were rarer, certainly indicate a state of the public mind different from the torpid bigotry which has been supposed universally to prevail.

There is another point on which we would not speak with much confidence, because although, as far as we can see, the facts are in our favour, all authority is, as far as it goes, against us. We allude to the difficulty supposed to be presented by the singular Hindoo institution of castes. We have seen no proof that an Indian must needs lose caste, by embracing our religion, provided he will only avoid certain indifferent actions, which, though Christians are in the habit of performing them, are as well avoided as done. Let him but continue to eat rice by

* By W. H. Trant, Esq. a gentleman lately in the Company's service. He says, 'The Saadhs utterly reject and abhors all kinds of idolatry; and the Ganges is considered by them with no greater veneration than by Christians. Ornament and gay apparel, of every kind, are strictly prohibited. Their dress is always white. They never make any obeisance or salam. They will not take an oath; and they are exempted in the courts of justice, their asseveration being considered equivalent. The Saadhs profess to abstain from all luxuries; such as tobacco, pann, opium, and wine. They never have nauches or dancing. All attack on man or beast is forbidden; but in self-defence resistance is allowed.

'Industry is strongly enjoined. The Saadhs take great care of their poor and infirm people. To receive assistance out of the "punt," or tribe, would be reckoned disgraceful, and render the offender liable to excommunication.

'All parade of worship is forbidden. Secret prayer is commended. Alms should be unostentatious; they are not to be done that they should be seen of men. The due regulation of the tongue is a principal duty.—The chief seats of the Saadh sect are Delhi, Agra, Jypore, and Furrukhabad; but there are several of the sect scattered over the country. An annual meeting takes place at one or other of the cities above-mentioned, at which the concerns of the sect are settled. The magistrate of Furrukhabad informed me, that he had found the Saadhs an orderly and well-conducted people. They are chiefly engaged in trade.

'Bhuwanee Dos was anxious to become acquainted with the Christian religion; and I gave him some copies of the New Testament in Persian and Hindoostanee, which he said he had read, and shewn to his people, and much approved. I had no copy of the Old Testament in any language which he understood well; but, as he expressed a strong desire to know the account of the creation as given in it, I explained it to him from the Arabic Version, of which he knew a little. I promised to procure him a Persian or Hindoostanee Old Testament, if possible.'

himself, and, for aught we can find, he may worship and believe as he will, without becoming an outcast, or exposing himself to any inconvenience other than christians are in the habit of encountering, when they happen to profess an unpopular opinion. Abstractly, it would no doubt be more reasonable and agreeable to eat in christian company; but under the circumstances, it would certainly be expedient and right to forego this satisfaction, rather than lose one's standing in society, and thus forfeit the opportunity of influencing others to embrace christian truth. Will it be said that such conduct would be a guilty unfaithfulness to the Gospel, and concession to an idolatrous faith? Doubtless it would be so, if unexplained; but not if such an interpretation of it were expressly disowned. This is actually the case of Rammohun Roy. He abjures and ridicules the popular superstition. He calls the master of christians his 'Saviour and King;' 'the divine teacher;' &c. and he professes that he has 'no objection to eat and live like christians,' and only 'refrains from it in order not to expose himself to the imputation of having changed his religion, for the good things of this world.' Still, since he does thus refrain, he does not come under the condemnation of the law; and the Surya whom he meets, as he goes to his devotions in a christian church, prostrates himself before him as low as ever. As to the ordinances, we are not aware that, in the view of his religion, a Hindoo would contract any ritual stain by receiving christian baptism; indeed, from the Baptists' record of the manner in which their converts broke caste, we apprehend it would not be so. For European and Hindoo christians to unite in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, would, no doubt, be abstractly more conformable to the spirit of our religion; but there might be reasons to justify the latter in solemnizing it wholly among themselves, and in so doing they would at least not break the unity of the church more than several communities of christians, who, for far less sufficient causes, refuse their fellowship to their fellow believers. In short, though, as we have said, we speak it with diffidence, we have seen nothing to satisfy us, that the adoption, by a Hindoo, of the religious opinions and practices of any sect of christians, involves any civil incapacity; nor even that a college of Brahmins, if they will but avoid offences of the class of inhaling a fly, or looking behind them when they first awake, may not teach with impunity any opinions, the most opposite to the Brahminical theology, and be aided by the hereditary authority, which their rank confers, in striking away the false foundations on which it rests.

We do not then despond concerning the religious prospects of this interesting country; not even after seeing the recent state-

ment of one, who has laboured there as a missionary more than thirty years that, 'there is not, at present, in the country more than a third of the christians, who were to be found in it eighty years ago; and this number diminishes every day, by frequent apostacy.' We do not know that the work of the Abbé Dubois, in which this is asserted, has yet reached this country. We have seen no more than a few extracts from it in an English newspaper. They express very emphatically his opinion: 'first, that under existing circumstances, there is no human possibility of converting the Hindoos to any sect of christianity; and, secondly, that the translation of the Holy Scriptures, circulated among them, so far from conducing to this end, will, on the contrary, increase the prejudices of the natives against the christian religion, and prove in many respects detrimental to it.' We are anxious to learn what his work contains, to substantiate these views; but we cannot but think that the latter sentiment, at least, is in part to be ascribed to his prejudices as a Catholic; and as to the former, we are so far from expecting that Hindoos will be converted to any thing which the Abbé Dubois would call christianity, that we were at some pains in our last number to show, what he affirms, that it is impossible. It is in the very particular, we conceive, which distinguishes all the forms of orthodox from pure christianity, that the insurmountable obstacle lies. But with the example before us, of one learned Hindoo, who has studied his way to christianity without a guide, and with the knowledge that the corrupt form, in which it is commonly exhibited, has been the foundation of the ostensible objections of many more, we cannot allow that the conversion of Hindoos to our faith is impossible.

It is, at any rate, a striking fact that at this period, when, by the immense labours of several years, the Christian scriptures have been extensively circulated through this great country, there have met in its capital, on the solid ground of the true Christian theology, two men, the one coming from the shadowy region of heathenism, the other,* from that of orthodoxy; the one, combining to a remarkable degree the advantages which give influence over his unbelieving countrymen, with such a knowledge of their character, as acquaints him how to address them with success; the other, possessing such advantages, as may be derived from European birth, and experience of Christian society; one an eminent philosopher, and both firm and upright men, as the price they have paid for their independent pursuit and

* Mr. Adam, the Baptist missionary, of whom we gave some account in our last Number.

maintenance of truth sufficiently evinces. That they are not lukewarm, there is satisfactory evidence before the public ; their situation is the most favourable for such attempts as two individuals may make, towards supplanting the prevalent idolatry by that Gospel of Christ, which is 'the power of God unto salvation ;' and it is impossible not to hope that, thus circumstanced, they are designed for instruments of some important good.

With such as believe that in that religion, which is at length to bless 'all the families of the earth,' there is nothing which renders it incommunicable to Hindoos, and that there are already indications of a degree of preparation for receiving it, it cannot but be a question, what may be done to hasten a consummation so devoutly to be wished. It must be owned that the proper way to convert unbelievers to Christianity, is to present its evidence fully to their minds ; and, prejudiced as they may be supposed to be, this will need to be done with considerable ability, considerable distinctness and force. Again ; this evidence will need to be laid before minds so accustomed to reasoning, as to be able to estimate its weight. It is to little purpose to offer it to such as are not prepared to understand it ; and still more hopeless does the attempt become, when the subjects of it are in abject bondage to the authority of their superiors' opinions. For these reasons, we think that the missionaries have made an injudicious selection of subjects for their enterprize, when they have addressed themselves to the lower castes of India. These are fastened to their superstitions by their extreme ignorance, and the slavish subjection of their minds. The authority of a Brahmin is infinitely more to them than the most cogent reasons. The Brahmins, on the contrary, can weigh an argument, and, strong opposition as their interests may make, there is no deference for authority to occupy their minds, and incapacitate them for being convinced. The difficulty of making an impression on them, would in this main particular be less ; and an impression made on them, would be made on the whole people. When the claims of Christianity therefore, are to be presented to adult idolaters of this nation, it is the Brahmins, we think, that ought to be addressed, but not by men so incompetent to plead any cause, as many of the Missionaries who have been sent to India ; nor by men who have such a cause to plead, as all of them have hitherto erroneously maintained, instead of Christianity. Monstrous as are the riddles, which the Brahmins uphold for truth, we have before had occasion to observe, that they are deficient neither in logical shrewdness nor practice, and when they seriously undertake to weigh an argument, they know how to sift it scrupulously. If then the evidences of our religion can be

best laid before them by the voice of a living missionary, it must be by one who is master of his subject, and able to exhibit it justly, and maintain it against them on solid grounds of argument. He must have good sense enough, not to offend them by pertinacious importunity, still less by denunciations, which cannot but seem arrogance, except as far as they are sustained by the impression which his reasoning has made. He must also be a man of great resources, and readiness, or his incompetency or hesitation will be construed into an evidence of some flaw in his cause; of great address and calmness, or he will overlook his opportunities, or be provoked to imprudence; of great energy and zeal, or he will find enough to discourage him. The world does not furnish many such missionaries at a time; but if it did, whether the object could best be attained by such agency, might still be made a question. In these studious times, a speculative community is apt to change its opinions, in consequence rather of what it reads, than what it hears. The press has greatly invaded the province of the tongue, and performs some of its offices better. The knowledge which, of old, a scholar must make a distant voyage to extract from its possessor by personal intercourse, he now collects at leisure from his writings. The difficult affairs of nations are settled more by the correspondence, than the colloquies of those to whom they are entrusted; and he who wishes to make even his neighbours of his own mind, on a subject of any intricacy, addresses them rather in a pamphlet, than a speech. Those who cannot read, it is true, must needs be addressed by the voice; and therefore, if there were a possibility of evangelizing a barbarous country, such as Caffraria or Greenland, in any other way than by educating its youth, if adult subjects were to be addressed at all, preaching would be, without an alternative, the method of conducting such an attempt. It has also under all circumstances, its distinctive and most important use. The preaching of the word fills a large space, which there is nothing else to supply, in the instrumental department of our religion. But we think it will not be found the most convenient vehicle for the exhibition to inquisitive men, of an argument so detailed, extensive, and in some respects complicated, as that which establishes the claims of Christianity. There are points in it, which in order to arrive at the absolute conviction they are able to communicate, an accurate observer will wish often and attentively to consider; to trace their several evidences, and view them in various aspects and relations; and this a book will aid him to do better than a preacher, and in some respects better than a companion. A book moreover makes no demand, and so excites no opposition in the proud or disputa-

tious. The great demand for a preacher will begin when, acquiescing in the authority of the Christian faith, a person becomes a subject for christian exhortation.

We think, then, that any important revolution in the religious belief of Hindoos will begin with the Brahmins; that whoever among them shall embrace Christianity will do it because he sees good reasons; and that those reasons will for the most part be best exhibited to them in the writings of sensible and learned Christians, in the original, or in translations. From a volume of Paley in such circulation as might not improbably be found for it in Hindoostan, we confess we should look for a result not unworthy to be compared with that of the exertions of our whole Bombay mission. We cannot forbear in conclusion to urge the likelihood that the writings of the best Christian apologists and expositors might be so disposed in India as essentially to serve the all-important cause of the diffusion of our faith. We are not, it is true, (like the Bombay society in one of our western counties, which is said to have made a considerable shipment of cotton to that province) to think of assuming the character of givers of alms to men, many of whom with their annual income would double the worth of the most valuable of our libraries. But by the aid of an individual possessing such facilities and so engaged in the object as Mr. Adam, we have no doubt that proper methods might be adopted to obtain no inconsiderable currency, for such books as we have described; and, with a large and well selected library of such at his disposal, we should hope for better results than if every volume were an orthodox missionary.

INTELLIGENCE.

[The following extract of a Letter from a friend dated London, April 2, 1823, contains some interesting particulars relating to the well known philanthropic enterprize of Mrs. Fry.]

A few days ago I went to Newgate to see Mrs. Fry, and the female prisoners under her care; and never have I been more pleased and affected. What she has accomplished is truly marvellous. I saw forty or fifty of those poor creatures neat, quiet and industrious; instead of being idle, riotous and filthy. I saw them listening to the Bible read and expounded to them by Mrs. Fry with deeper and more unaffected interest than any congre-

gation I ever saw before; Mrs. Fry herself, and her associates, managing and directing every thing proper for their comfort and instruction in that beautiful, quiet, unpretending manner in which the Quakers so excel. The apartments are wretchedly small and crowded, but she manages to have one devoted to a school for the children, and another for the adults; another is set apart as a sort of Chapel. I observed as we walked round to see the women at their occupations, after the religious service, that they all seemed pleased to see her, and spoke to her of their hopes and prospects as if sure of her sympathy, while there was no canting parade of attention to them on her part. There was even in one or two instances a severity of manner which rather surprised me. She told me that when she first came to the prison six or eight years ago, all the female prisoners, tried and untried, had one common room, which was such a scene of uproar, quarrelling, blasphemy, and disgusting filthiness, as could hardly be conceived. Now they are separated and classed as far as the wretched apartments will admit; and the best hospital I ever saw had not more neatness, good order and industry than the prison of Newgate. I had heard of all this before, but I had, some how or other, always a lurking suspicion that there was some exaggeration or charletanerie about it; but I am now perfectly convinced. There is no resisting ocular demonstration; and if only a tenth part of what I saw had been effected, it would still have been an incalculable good. Women are frequently brought there who are in the lowest state of ignorance and moral degradation, who have hardly heard of such a thing as the bible, or any thing else but what was vile and corrupting. They are immediately placed under Mrs. Fry's care, and a few days generally suffice, she told me, to bring them to some degree of order and propriety. They are then taught to read and to work, and hear the scriptures read and explained to them in the most simple, impressive and useful manner, so that it is sometimes the most useful event of their lives to be sent to Newgate. There have been many instances of radical improvement and reformation of character in the poor creatures sent there, who have afterwards been liberated or sent to Botany Bay. Now is there any nobler or higher field of exertion? Can any reward be too great for the benevolence, courage and perseverance which effects such things? I can hardly conceive how a woman of delicacy and refinement such as Mrs. Fry, could ever have begun such a work.

[The publication of the following notice, which was furnished for our Number of May and June, has been delayed by its being mislaid.]

The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, Piety and Charity, held their anniversary meeting at the Church in Chauncy Place, on the day previous to the General Election; and after the usual business, attended divine service. The Rev. Henry Ware, of Boston, preached to a numerous and highly gratified audience on the reciprocal connexion of Knowledge, Piety and Charity; and a very liberal collection was received.

The officers of the Society for the current year are as follows;—

Eliphalet Porter, D.D. *President.*
S. Parkman, *Vice-President.*
Henry Colman, *Secretary.*
Elisha Clap, *Treasurer.*
Aaron Bancroft, D.D.
John Pierce, D.D.
Charles Lowell, } *Trustees.*
Henry Ware, Jr.
James Walker,
James Morrill,
Joseph May, } *Auditors of Accounts.*

The subjoined report of the Trustees, will show the condition and prospects of the Society.

The Trustees of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, Piety and Charity, offer their annual Report.

They see no reason to distrust the propriety and expediency of the decision of this Society made at its annual meeting in May, 1821, to suspend for a while its publications, for the sake of increasing its permanent funds to the amount of one thousand dollars, and making provision for every subscriber or donor to the Society to receive of its agents, if he should desire it, to the full value of his donation or subscription in such tracts, as he might select, at the lowest wholesale price.

The funds are in a flourishing condition, and by another anniversary, will doubtless reach the desired amount; and at that period or before, the Society may resume its labours with a strong confidence of adding much to the stock of good accomplished in times past, and upon which it may look back with high satisfaction.

The Society have within a few years had the most serious difficulties to struggle with. It has had to pass through a most perilous navigation; but having got once more into the open sea, with the patronage and kindness of those, from whom we think

we have a right to demand patronage and kindness, we have no doubt of being able soon to report a successful progress.

The Trustees regard the Society with singular respect, as eminently adapted to do good by the publication and dissemination of enlightened and practical religious tracts, and as affording in this respect singular advantages; as the cherished institution of beloved fathers and brethren in the ministry, who, we trust, are now removed to higher services of beneficence; and as a common bond of union among the friends of liberal Christianity.

They demand therefore, of such, as deserve that honourable distinction, instead of complaining that this Society has done so little, to show what similar society, with no greater means, has done so much; and instead of attempting to deprive it of what it has by frugality and good management already accumulated for the benevolent objects it has in view, they call upon them by their own personal and liberal aid to enable them to labour immediately at these excellent objects, with a zeal and efficiency corresponding to their earnest wishes.

A new building for public worship, has been commenced by the Unitarian congregation at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This society has for some time past, been under the pastoral care of the Rev. John Campbell. *Unitarian Miscellany.*

The annual examination at the Theological Seminary at Andover, took place on the 24th Sept. last. Dissertations were read by ten students in the class of Sacred Literature; by thirty-eight in that of Christian Theology; and nineteen in that of Sacred Rhetorick. Five students besides were absent, or excused on account of ill health.

Evangelical Lutheran Church.—The Synod of this church in the State of New York, and adjacent parts, held its annual session from the 30th August to 2d Sept. last, at Livingston, Columbia county, New York. The venerable Dr. Quitman of Rhinebeck is its president. The meeting was attended this year by fifteen ministers, and as many lay delegates. Three clerical members were absent, and six parishes were not represented. A new church in this connexion, has been consecrated during the last year, in the city of New York. The Synod has under its care a flourishing seminary in the town of Hartwick, to which is attached a Theological Library, of a thousand volumes. It has forty-one academical, and ten theological students. A vote was passed at the late meeting, making an appropriation from the funds of the Synod towards the increase o the library.

Theological Seminary of Yale College.—Provision has recently been made in this institution, for regular instruction to students in Theology. A Professorship of Didactic Theology has been established by the corporation, and subscriptions have been obtained towards a fund for the support of others. The course of instruction, which is to occupy three years, is to be directed for the present, by the professors of didactic theology, languages and divinity, with assistance from the Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory. Lectures are to be delivered on sacred literature, didactic theology, and sacred rhetoric.

Missionary to Bombay.—On the evening of Thursday, the 25th Sept., Rev. Edmund Frost was ordained an evangelist in the Tabernacle church at Salem, and embarked on the 2d following day for Calcutta, on his way to join the mission at Bombay.

Colonization Society.—The last intelligence from the colony, planted by this society upon Cape Messurado, is contained in letters from Mr. Ashmun and Dr. Ayres, under date of July 21st and 22d. 'The rains and other interruptions from sickness,' says Dr. Ayres, 'have as yet prevented the accomplishment of this object; [viz. the building of houses.] I hope we shall shortly have our houses finished; when that is done, I shall introduce an entire new mode of procedure. Their lots will be surveyed to them, and each one go to work for himself. I have set the first of November for the time that all rations will cease to be delivered, except to invalids.—There are a number of those, who must remain at the charge of the Society.

'It is my intention, when the lots are divided off to the people, to allow them half their time to labour on their lots. The remaining half, they will be liable to be called to public labour.

'As soon as the houses are finished, and the lots appropriated to the individuals, it is my intention to put in practice the plan which has ever been nearest my heart in the project of colonizing, viz.: all male minors, who have no guardian in the colony, to be classed with the captured Africans. They are to have a house built for the occasion. The Rev. Lot Carey has consented to take charge of them for the present. They will be called up at five in the morning, and attend prayers; be ready to repair to business at sunrise, work until 8 A. M.; breakfast at 9, repair to work until 11: then attend school till half past 12; adjourn for recreation until half past 2; their labour to be always subject to my order. They will be employed principally in clearing and cultivating a plantation in the best manner. We stand most in need of tools of many descriptions. I hope soon to be able to

give the Society more cheering accounts of our proceedings in this quarter; but it is yet in the bosom of futurity, and I know not what trials and obstacles it may please the Almighty to lay in our way.'

Mr. Ashmun writes:—

'The establishment of the packet line will be the making of the colony. By the return of the packet, several of the settlers go home for their families and property. All pay their passage, and leave bonds for reimbursing the expenses already incurred by the Society on their account. One of these, Mr. Waring, from Petersburgh, with $12,000 will call on you in Washington. It is his intention to fit out a vessel with colonists from Petersburgh.

'I have determined to let no opportunity pass without humbly, but earnestly representing to the Board, and every influential correspondent I have in America, the spiritual and moral necessities of your colonists. A missionary and two school-masters, with a female teacher, are needed beyond measure. They ought certainly all to be white.

'The rains set in about the 13th of May. They have not yet proved very severe, but we are seldom a night or day without a considerable fall of water.

'Barracks, or a range of houses, built and covered partly in the native style, are nearly completed for our liberated captives. The poor fellows have hardly had justice done them hitherto. It is proposed to place over them the Rev. Lot Carey, to keep them much to themselves, and let them cultivate land enough to employ a good share of their leisure. In a short time they will, I believe, not only support themselves, but always have on hand a provision for the subsistence of future shipments of the same class.

'Our last accounts from America filled us with hope in relation to the future prospects of the Society at home. There were evident symptoms of a disposition in the American public to rub open their eyes on the subject. They will, I believe, sir, come on as fast as, perhaps, the good of the colony shall require. It is not desirable, at present, that more than three or four shipments of 60 persons be made in the year. But the proportion may increase, and that very largely, every year. Let 100 families be well settled with a good house and perfectly improved lot to each in town, and a plantation without, well cultivated. Let a hospital, warehouse, and temporary receptacle for new comers be prepared—and the wheels of the machine, its schools, courts, &c. get a good momentum on them in a proper direction, and, sir, you may throw in new settlers as fast as your funds will possibly admit. If we live to witness the progress of things here

two years hence, I believe all this and more will be realized. The last Saturday in every month is court day.—One has occurred, and we have had one trial by jury. It was conducted with great propriety, and the verdict strictly according to evidence. It was a criminal prosecution.'

Commissioners for Foreign Missions.—The fourteenth annual meeting of this board was holden in Boston on the 17th and 18th of September. Fifteen members were present. The report of the Treasurer stated the receipts of the year ending August 31st, to be $55,808 94, and the expenditures, $66,379 75. Seven new members were elected. The Annual Sermon was preached by Rev. Pres. Day, of New Haven, from Nehemiah vi. 3. The next meeting is to be holden in Hartford, Connecticut, on the third Wednesday of September, 1824.

General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.—In the narrative of the state of religion, &c., presented at the last meeting of this body, we are told 'that the Presbyterian Church in the United States, embraces 13 Synods, and more than 70 Presbyteries. One of these Presbyteries is in the eastern part of New England; all the others lie on the west and south of that region, and stretch from Niagara and Champlain, in the State of New York, to Missouri and Louisiana on the south-west, a distance of more than 1500 miles.'

The Assembly has under its direction, two Theological Seminaries. 'The Theological Seminary, at Princeton, has been unusually full during the last year. At present, it numbers eighty-five students. But the Board have still to detail the embarrassments under which it labours for want of funds. The Theological Seminary at Auburn is yet in its incipient state, but is represented as rising in prosperity. Its number of students, at present, is thirteen.' The condition of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, is more particularly described in the 'Abstract of the eleventh annual report of the board of directors.' 'The number of students at the date of the last report was *sixty-five*. During the summer session *eight* were received; and *three* were regularly dismissed.

'At the close of the session, certificates that they had completed the whole course prescribed, were given to *seven* students.

'During the winter session *Forty-four* additional students were received; *seven* withdrew in good standing; *ten* were regularly dismissed, and *two* died.

'The whole number of students connected with the Seminary during the winter session was *ninety-six*. The number now in connexion with it is *eighty-five*.

'Since the last Annual Report, *twenty-two* students have been licensed to preach the Gospel.

'The Semi-annual examinations of the students have been satisfactory to the Board.

'The benefactions during the year for the support of necessitous students, as reported by the Professors, amount to $1,910 63½, exclusive of several articles of clothing.

'The number of books presented to the library through the year past has been small, compared with preceding years. Only twenty volumes have been received. To these, the Board have the pleasure to report, has been added the valuable library of the late Theological Seminary of the Associate Reformed Synod. Shortly after the last Assembly rose, this library, together with the valuable cases in which it was contained, were delivered by a committee of the late Associate Reformed Synod, to a committee of the Board of Directors. The books and cases were received into the Seminary in the month of June last. On this subject, the librarian in his report to the Board remarks, 'The number of volumes is between 2400 and 2500. They are, with some exceptions, in very good condition as to binding, &c. generally excellent editions, and making altogether a collection equally rare and valuable, and fully answering, it is believed, any expectations that may have been formed respecting it.' The whole library now consists of about 4,500 volumes, and nearly 600 pamphlets.'

The last Assembly appropriated for the general purposes of the Institution, including the unexpended balance of the former year, the sum of $5,430 23.

The expenditures of the year have amounted to $5,358 95½; leaving $71 27½ of the appropriation unexpended.

OBITUARY.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

When so valuable a life as that of the late Mrs. Gray was so unexpectedly terminated, saddened and subdued by the intelligence, the heart was at first too oppressed at the removal of such a character, calmly to enumerate the traits which composed it. To those who knew the deceased, the effort could, indeed, at no time be necessary. To such, it were superfluous to mention the shrewdness and sagacity of her intellect, her solid judgment and lively observation, her union of the devout and social affections—a spirit of ardent, profound, contemplative piety, combined with every social, and companionable quality—strict in principle, yet indulgent in disposition, and with vigorous powers of body and mind continually ex-

erted to add 'to faith, virtue.' They who were, in any degree, admitted to an intercourse with this venerated lady, can testify as to these characteristics; not to touch on the hallowed precincts of that domestic circle where they were more peculiarly developed, and where their recollection, alas! only enhances the poignancy of their sense of privation. But, as the examples of those who occupy the high places in society, is, and ought to be, of extensive influence, if there be any who have heard of the departed, only as the wife of the wealthiest among our citizens, it may not be useless to inform them, that advantages so liberally allotted, were received with religious gratitude, enjoyed with tempered satisfaction, and dispensed with liberality, unalloyed by ostentation. Remarkable indeed for the prosperity which attended her—both in degree and duration—she might almost be fancied as having sat for that portrait of 'Wisdom,' where, in the boldness of oriental personification, she is represented with *length of days in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour.* Yet, however privileged in an extraordinary exemption from the evils of poverty, sickness, or bereavement, she was far more favoured to escape the natural and most formidable influences of so cloudless a career in forwarding the selfish propensities and drying the springs of sympathy. But she seems to have looked on life, and its goods, with the conscientious and responsible feelings of a Christian, who, aware of its exposure to reverse, retained those moderate desires in success, that were a security against depression in possible disaster. And while the sunshine of her happier destiny was reflected upon others, to cheer and to comfort by its kindly communications, she proved her beneficence not of that kind which requires the goad of personal suffering to stimulate its activity, since, though *the iron had never entered her own soul*, she knew how to feel for those who were pierced. May the effect of such example not be wholly lost on the community, but continue preserved in that holy remembrance which constitutes the earthly immortality of the just, and is the earnest of an higher reserved for them in the heavens!

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

The Conductors of this work give notice that, after the next number, which concludes the fifth volume of the second series, they shall continue to publish under the title of the 'Christian Examiner and Theological Review.' One of the reasons for this change is, that very few complete copies of the work remain for the supply of new subscribers. No alteration in its character is contemplated, except that of embracing a somewhat greater variety of topics. The price of subscription will be the same as heretofore. A number of 80 pages will be published every two months. The type and size of the page will be those of the North American Review. Every exertion will be made to secure a punctual publication and transmission to distant subscribers. Communications may be made to Oliver Everett, the publisher (at No. 13 Cornhill.)

A list of donations to the Evangelical Missionary Society in Massachusetts is necessarily postponed to the next number.

The communication of A Constant Reader is under the consideration of the gentleman who superintended the number for May and June.

THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

NEW SERIES—No. 30.

November and December, 1823.

SUBSTITUTES FOR RELIGION.

WITHOUT controversy it is the doctrine of the Scriptures that 'he that doeth righteousness is righteous.'* And it will hardly be controverted that by *righteousness* the sacred writers frequently mean not merely the performance of the duties of man to his fellow man. This word, in the Scriptures, has often a wider scope, and implies the discharge of all our duties:—those which we owe to ourselves, as prudence, temperance, fortitude, and moral purity in general of heart and of life; all those which grow out of our relations to mankind; and those of reverence, trust, submission, worship and obedience, which we owe to God. Righteousness, in the Scriptures, is often synonymous with virtue, in the broad and general sense in which that word is used by moralists of the present day; and it means moral goodness. Moral goodness, or virtue, may be defined to be the doing or the suffering of the will of God, in the hope of his favour. Thus defined, virtue, or righteousness, embraces every thing which it is the will of God that we should do, or bear, or abstain from doing, for the advancement and security of our own happiness, or for the benefit of others: for, in proportion as the good of the creature is promoted, in such proportion is the honour of the Creator and Governor heightened, and his favour secured.

It will be readily seen that this view of righteousness opens a wide field for the efforts of a righteous man. How much does he see before him, to exercise all his moral and physical powers, in order to acquire and maintain the character of a good man!

* James, iii. 7.

How much must be done, that requires strenuous effort! How much must be abstained from, which involves the sacrifice of present ease and gratification! In regard to others, the equity, which is dictated by the laws of nature, must be observed at the expense of toils and watchings and privations. The positive institutions of civil society must be sustained, and its requirements answered, at the expense of something that would otherwise contribute to individual aggrandizement. The claims of the family—of child, father, mother—must be met, at the expense of carefulness and watchfulness, of self-denial and self-command. Institutions must be established and sustained for the support of good order and good morals—for the diffusion of knowledge—for the advancement of the useful and elegant arts—for the promotion of our country's welfare, of humanity and religion. The plea of the helpless and friendless—the cry of the widow and the orphan—the appeal of the destitute and those who have fallen into decay, must be heard:—the tear of the broken-hearted must be observed and wiped away:—the cloud that settles upon the dwelling of the disappointed, the bereaved, the desponding, must be dispelled by the light of sympathy and the voice of encouragement;—and the way of the inexperienced and the doubtful must be pointed out, in the counsels of wisdom.

In regard to ourselves, the gratification to which appetite prompts, and which opportunity presents, must often be denied to appetite. The passion that would stimulate to evil must be suppressed, by an effort that is often painful. Our pride and vanity must be humbled, by a comparison of what our attainments are with what they ought to be. Truth must be told, at the sacrifice of a present advantage or profit. Sobriety must be observed, at the hazard of appearing singular;—prudence, even in a laudable enterprise, consulted, at the risk of seeming backward in a good work; and that knowledge assiduously and laboriously sought, which throws light upon the path of our duty, and gives firmness and confidence to our step as we advance in it.

In regard to God, a prevailing and abiding sense of his presence—an adoring sentiment of his power and his purity—lofty conceptions of his wisdom and majesty, must be habitually cherished in our minds. It must become not merely our study, but our *delightful* study, to trace his benevolence in the works of nature, and in the course of his providence; and we must dwell, with a religious pleasure, upon those affecting evidences of his care of us, his condescension to our infirmities, and his compassion for us, in the ignorance and wretchedness of our race, which he has furnished to us in his holy word. We must remember our accountableness to him, and must *show* that we do not forget

it. We must trust in his faithfulness, and submit ourselves to his disposal. We must find our happiness in magnifying him in our thoughts. And we must subdue all our desires, wishes, and purposes to a cheerful subservience to his will.

To do all this is to be righteous; for this is to do righteousness. To do this is to secure the divine favour, and that eternal happiness which is the evidence and the reward of the divine favour. To do this is to be religious,—to be good—to purify ourselves, in an humble measure, as God is pure, and to be righteous even as he is righteous.

But, all this, it may be said, is not easily done. It may be so said in truth. And it is granted that it is no very easy thing to be a very good man. We grant that many of these duties are of difficult performance;—that many of these virtues and graces are not easily attained. We grant that there are obstacles to be surmounted in proving that we are righteous by doing rightousness. But whether there are not greater difficulties in being unrighteous, it must be left to the instructions of God's word and of his providence, to the observation of the attentive, to the testimony of conscience, and to the wretched experience of the wicked, to determine. We admit that the path of virtue is an uphill path: but it is the only path which leads to that 'building of God not made with hands' in which the good man expects to rest from his toils: for that house is 'in the heavens.' We admit that thus to watch, and toil, and sacrifice, and obey, is no easy thing. And, yet, we know no other certain way to 'glory, honour, and immortality,' than 'by a patient continuance in well doing.'

Yet, in almost all ages of the world, there have been those who have looked for the rewards of righteousness, and have flattered themselves, or been flattered by others, into the belief that they shall ultimately secure those rewards, upon some more favourable conditions than this painful *doing of righteousness*. There have been those who have earnestly coveted the crown, but have had no relish for the battle that must be fought for it, and who, rather than engage in the conflict in person, have chosen to rest their pretensions upon the services of some *substitute*.

1. One of the substitutes for practical goodness, on which we are apt to rest our hopes of justification and acceptance, is *good resolutions*. We look back upon the past, and, admonished by conscience, we resolve that we will be better than we have been. We know that a resolution that we will do right is the first step towards doing right. We begin to take to ourselves the credit of having completed our journey, because we have succeeded so well in beginning it. Experience, indeed, soon convinces us

that our resolution was too spiritless to overcome our love of ease, and too weak to resist the onset of temptation. And we indulge our ease, or yield to temptation, till an accusing conscience again drives us into a resolution that the future shall not be like the past; and we make these good resolutions so sincerely, and repeat them so often, that we are ready to believe that they will be accepted as, at least, of some account. And it is true they are of *some* account. They are at the bottom of much, if not of all, that is great or good in the conduct of life; for we do little that is either good or great without having previously resolved that we will do it. But let us remember, that, although a foundation is indispensable to an edifice, yet a foundation may be laid and no superstructure ever raised upon it. To prepare the ground and collect materials is not to build. To resolve is not to do. To say 'I go, sir,' yet not to go, is not to do the will of the father who said, 'son, go *work* to-day in my vineyard.' And the prodigal was embraced by his father, and clothed in the best robe, not because he had *resolved* to arise and go to his father, while, yet, he continued in the land of his degradation, and loitered among the scenes of his riot and wretchedness, but because he *did* arise, and *did come* to the abode of plenty and of parental love.

2. The second substitute for practical virtue, or righteousness, of which we shall take notice, is a zealous *profession* of religion. It has always been more easy to profess almost any virtue than to practise it. Friendship, generosity, patriotism are much more frequently, because much more easily, professed than proved. A real devotion to the cause of philanthropy, of truth, of liberty, is a thing which involves expensive efforts. But a profession of such devotion—which, with men, will sometimes answer the same end as the real virtue,—is made at no great expense of time, or comfort, or any thing else that is valuable, unless it be of truth. The giving up of one's self to the service and the will of God is followed by labours, and attended by momentous responsibilities. But, to make a parade of such devotion is no difficult matter with one who is satisfied with the reputation of a quality which he knows that he does not possess; or one who is so weak as to suppose that God seeth as man seeth, and that like man, he is liable to be deceived in judging of human character.

But, what saith the Lord to his prophet, in regard to this matter? 'Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah that enter in at these gates and worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and

your doings. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord are these. If ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless and the widow;—then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, forever and ever."* The profession, or the boast, of any man that he is the temple of the Lord, that his soul is the abiding place of the ever blessed spirit of God, is a vain profession, an empty boast, if he is polluted by the deeds, or cherishes the desires, in which that Divine Spirit has no pleasure, and with which he cannot be associated.

What says Jesus of the efficacy of these professions? 'Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out demons, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.'†

And yet are there not those who, by the importance which they attach to it, seem to think that a formal and technical *profession of religion* is the very essence of religion;—that with it there is no danger, and without it no hope:—that publicly assenting to some favourite formula of faith, or subscribing to certain articles, or covenanting with others to observe one particular rite of religion, is religion itself: and that the door of heaven, if opened at all for such as do not make this technical profession, is opened reluctantly, for one who presents himself before it, even though he come bending under a weight of years spent in the offices of justice, humanity, and unostentatious piety.

Do not such among our brethren—such among ourselves—consider, or do they not know, that, if there is no other evidence than such professions, that the holy and beneficent spirit of God dwells in their hearts, and animates them to a life of purity and beneficence, their professions might as well be spared? What does it prove that you belong to this or to that church;—that you commune with christians at this or that table;—or that you are under the christian watch of this or that connexion? It proves that you have, within your reach, one or another *class of means* of becoming enlightened and virtuous. But it does not prove that those means are of any benefit to you,—that you have gained by them any valuable knowledge, that you are excited by them to any works of righteousness, or that you are restrained by them from any vicious indulgence. How fallacious, then, is any profession of religion, as a substitute for religion itself!

* Jer. vii. 1—7. † Matt. vii. 23.

How unsubstantial, as the basis of any hope of favour and of final acceptance with God!

3. The third substitute for religion, of which we shall take notice, is *the observance of the rites or ceremonies of religion.*

We do not mean to be understood as denouncing, or even disapproving religious ceremonies. We are far from wishing to banish these externals of piety. We know too well the infirmities of our nature to suppose, that even so spiritual a religion as Christianity can exist in the world, and be cherished by those who most need it, and be spread among those who are now ignorant of its influence and its hopes, without something visible to attract attention, awaken the dormant powers, command a seriousness of manner, and inspire a religious awe suited to the religious services to which they are usually attached. Let these rites be such as Christians chose to adopt, in conformity to their own understanding of the instructions of their Lord, and such as, according to the measure of wisdom severally imparted to them, they may find calculated for their enjoyment and improvement;—always remembering, however, how lamentably propense the world has ever been to mistake the shadow for the substance, and to rest satisfied with the forms of religion, to the neglect of its duties and its spirit.

How continually did this propensity discover itself among the Jews, even in the purest ages of their temple-worship! In the time of our Lord, how entirely had it overcome the more rational instructions of the old prophets of Israel, and perverted the judgment of the most sage and influential doctors of the law! The beautiful proportions of Religion, as she was moulded and animated by the Divinity, and set forth by those in whom his spirit had dwelt in ancient days, were buried under the voluminous drapery of the Jewish ritual; and her lifeless form received a blind homage long after the glowing spirit had left it.

'Wherefore'—says the intrepid Samuel to his warlike king, returning from the slaughter of a whole people—'wherefore didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?' 'And Saul said unto Samuel, yea, I *have* obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites: but the *people* took of the spoil, sheep, and oxen, and the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed'—for what?—'*to sacrifice unto Jehovah, thy God* in Gilgal.' 'And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat

of rams.'* In perfect harmony with this were the instructions of the bards of Israel in succeeding ages. 'To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to me? saith the Lord. When ye make many prayers I will not hear.'—why?—'your hands are full of blood.'† 'To what purpose cometh there incense to me from Sheba, and the sweet-cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet to me.'‡ Not that sacrifices were in themselves wrong. Under certain regulations and conditions they were required. A refusal to offer them, under those regulations, would have been punished. But these sacrifices were required, not as an ultimate duty, but as an *inducement* to obedience still higher and more purely moral. They could never, and they will never, be accepted as a substitute for moral virtue.

In this particular the new covenant is in exact accordance with the old. 'The Prophet of Nazareth' confirms the doctrine of the venerable array of the prophets who had gone before him. 'Go ye and learn what this meaneth—I will have mercy and not sacrifice.'§ 'Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law,—judgment, mercy, and faith.' Not that these ritual minutæ were criminal; but they were merely ritual, and unimportant, when compared with moral obedience—with the doing of righteousness: for, 'these things ought ye to have done, yet not to have left the other undone.'‖

Of what avail did Jesus give those, who had worked iniquity to understand that it would be to them, when they should stand at last and knock at the door of light and joy, that they could then say 'we have eaten and drunk in thy presence?' It would avail them as much as the same plea will avail those, of the present day, who rest their hope of future salvation upon that rite, or upon any other, or upon all the rest, of the externals of religion.

In our day the sacrifices of bullocks and rams are not substituted for real righteousness. But are there not other sacrifices that are?—the sacrifice of time, assigned by the Giver of our time for the practical duties of life,—time, given up by day, which is claimed by duty for business,—and time, given up by night, which is required by nature for repose:—time given up, not so much to the subduing and controlling of the animal passions, as to the excitement of them; and rather to producing a fervid state of the moral feelings, than to giving those feelings a

* 1 Sam. xv. 19—22. † Isai. i. 11—15.
‡ Jer. vi. 20. § Matt. ix. 13. ‖ Matt. xxiii. 23.

direction to the sober offices of domestic life, and to maintaining social order, and cultivating the sympathies of our nature and the charities of our religion, and directing them towards the wants, the woes, and the frailties of mankind? And if time, and health, and charity *are* thus sacrificed,—though it be done in religious meetings, and with all the formalities of religion,—when that sacrifice is not distinctly claimed by the Lord our God, what ground have we to suppose that they will be more acceptable to him than were the sheep and oxen of Saul, which were themselves the proofs of his disobedience?

4. There is another thing, upon which men have depended for the character and the rewards of the righteous, rather than upon the doing of righteousness, which is nearly related to that of which we have just spoken. It is *the diligent attending upon religious instruction.*

There are those with whom going to church regularly and reverently on Sunday; seizing every opportunity that presents itself, or that can be found, out of the usual course, to hear preaching, praying, and exhortations; and zealously engaging in the support of prayer-meetings, lectures, and conferences, makes up nearly the aggregate of righteousness; and who suppose that, in walking this round, they describe the circle of religious duties. These—like those silly women, whom the Apostle describes to Timothy, as being led captive by those who have the form of godliness but deny its power—are 'forever learning, yet never able to come to the knowledge of the truth'—the knowledge of this great truth, that it is not enough merely to know our duties, but that we must also *do* them. Those who form such opinions of the righteousness that shall save them, are like scholars who spend their years in learning a science which they never expect, and never intend, to apply to the purposes of practical life; or like one who thinks he shall become an expert artisan by only *hearing lectures* upon the mysteries of his art. We know that a man will never become a mechanic by listening to discourses upon the lever, the wedge, and the screw. He may learn the names of these powers, and may see what has been, and what may be done by them. He may learn the uses to which particular tools are to be applied: but, till he takes them into his own hand, and spends many a day and many a night with them, he will hardly save himself from hunger and nakedness by the use of them.

Those who are thus forever learning, must long since have learned, that we have high authority for saying 'not the *hearers* of the law are just before God, but the *doers* of the law shall

be justified.* And let all such remember that it was a venerable servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, 'Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.'†

5. Another thing upon which Christians have fallen as a substitute for the laborious doing of righteousness is, *the holding of correct speculative opinions, in regard to the doctrines of religion.*

The investigation of truth is, indeed, among the noblest and most honourable employments of the human mind. It is a delightful although it is often a laborious employment. And Truth, when pursued and seized by her ardent lover, is unquestionably fair, and is to be cherished and venerated by all who hope to mingle with the great and good. But she is to be thus cherished and venerated, not, principally, upon her own account, but because of her high and holy ministrations. She is excellent and valuable chiefly as the handmaid of Goodness. She holds out her torch to guide the doubtful and timid steps of Virtue, in the darkness of her earthly way. She encourages her sinking heart by directing her eye to the glories of her heavenly home. She is the fair, the lovely attendant of Virtue, but she must not be mistaken for Virtue herself: for, 'Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.'‡

Why, then, should the theological world be wrought up into angry controversy, upon a speculative point, which let it be settled as it may, does not necessarily conduce, in any degree, to the practical righteousness of the combatants on either side? When the disciples of the Prince of Peace agree as to the practical duties which Truth recommends, as heard and understood by them all, is it of so great consequence as to justify the sacrifice of peace and good fellowship among them, that they should determine precisely the spot upon which she stands when she speaks in the name of the Most High?

The most correct apprehension of the doctrines of the gospel *may* be found in the head, when, at the same time, there is literally nothing of the spirit of the gospel in the heart, and when the hands are equally strangers to the works of righteousness which the gospel requires as the condition of eternal life. Those doctrines have, indeed, their importance. Their value and influence, where any thing can exert an influence, are incalculable. They are highly propitious to the production of pure desires, and of chastened and enduring affection. They are propitious

* Rom. ii. 13. † James i. 22. ‡ 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

to the formation of good resolutions and good habits. So is the sun, and so is the rain propitious and even indispensable to the growth of fruits, for the nourishment and refreshment of the body. But as the sun may shine, and the rains may fall upon lands that lie barren forever, so all the holy and blessed influences of truth may be exerted upon a heart so little alive to the loveliness of truth and goodness, as to be awakened by them to none of the glorious efforts of righteousness.

6. The last of the substitutes for practical, personal righteousness, of which we shall at present take notice, is one upon which the vanity of men, under the assumed name of humility, first, and very early, induced them to fall. We mean *external privileges in regard to religion*, and especially the privilege of being related to some one of distinguished piety and faith, in having been descended from him, or taught by him.

So long ago as the appearance and preaching of John the Baptist, the doctrine had become popular among the Jews, and was especially inculcated by the Pharisees, that they were entitled to a place in the kingdom of heaven, in consideration of the great privilege they enjoyed as the children of Abraham. They maintained that all, who were of the circumcision, were beloved of God, who, when he made his covenant with Abraham, assured him with an oath, that no one, who bore the seal of that covenant, should ever descend into hell;—that the faith and righteousness of Abraham would be imputed to all his posterity;—and that they would be saved, even to the exclusion of all the rest of mankind, through the merits of the patriarchs, and particularly of Abraham, whatever might be their own moral conduct. Some carried this doctrine of substitution so far as to say not only that God would not, but that he *could* not shut them out of the Messiah's kingdom, provided they had a *knowledge* of God, although they continued in infidelity and disobedience.*

This substitute for personal righteousness, though it showed rather an unkind aspect to such as were *not* thus privileged, was particularly flattering to those who had the good fortune to be descended from Abraham. It consulted their ease, and was especially accommodating to their exclusiveness as a nation, and to their passions as individuals. And besides, as we have already suggested, it savoured of modesty in those who were conscious of having done no good themselves, to renounce all hopes of acceptance upon the ground of their own righteousness, and to rely upon that of their great progenitor.

This popular error the Baptist meets and exposes when he

* To these several points of Rabbinical doctrine, see Whitby, Wetstein, Rosenmüller, and Kuinoel, in Matt. iii. 9.

cries in the wilderness, 'Bring forth fruits meet for repentance; and think not to say, We have Abraham for our father.' And the doctrine of John was confirmed by his great successor, who said to these same men, who thus looked to the merits and righteousness of Abraham for their salvation, 'Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out.'* And he forewarns them that those who should stand without, when the master of the heavenly feast should have risen up and shut the door, and should plead with their Lord for admittance on the ground that he had taught in their streets, would find that even that privilege would be of no avail with such as had wrought iniquity.

It is not difficult to see the insufficiency of both these grounds of hope, in the case of the Jews. What would it avail them that Abraham was their father? While they did not the works of Abraham,—while they showed neither his faith nor his pious and prompt obedience,—they were none of Abraham's children. It would rather aggravate their condemnation that they had degenerated from the virtues of their ancestor, and had become worse than others, while they had enjoyed superior means of becoming better. What was it to them that the Lord had taught in their streets, and that they were so privileged as to enrol their names among his disciples,—so long as they had refused to obey his instructions and to follow in his steps of light and beneficence? Better would it be for such, could they plead for admission on the ground that they had had no privileges, than on the ground that they had enjoyed and abused them. Better, could they say, Thou hast *not*, than Thou *hast* taught in our streets.

Yet, if this reasoning is conclusive, and if the delusiveness of such hopes is obvious in the case of the *Jews*, why shall we give greater credit to either of these pleas, when they are offered by Christians? And yet we hear Christians, every day, professing to rest all their hopes of future acceptance and glory, not, indeed, upon the merits of Abraham, or his righteousness, but upon the merits and righteousness of Christ, a son of Abraham.

Let us not be considered as undervaluing the merits of Abraham or of Christ. The faith and obedience of the father of the faithful was, indeed admirable, and highly honourable and salutary to him. And we are told that they were imputed to *him*—not to his posterity—as righteousness. The righteousness of Abraham was, moreover, beneficial to his posterity; for, in consideration of it, his children were made the depositaries of the divine oracles. They were enlightened in their duty, and had

* Matt. viii. 11, 12.

blessings accumulated upon them. Among the children of Jacob a light sprung up to enlighten the Gentiles: and they were, ultimately, so reclaimed from the ignorance and vices of polytheism, that, to the present day, every child of Abraham is a worshipper of the One True God, the God of Abraham. Here are temporal blessings, and moral light, and the *means* of moral excellence bestowed upon the children, in consideration of the faith and virtue of the ancestor. But these things do not secure the divine favour to the children. They do not, necessarily, make the children better. They may, and if abused or misimproved, they *will* make them worse, and more worthy of the condemnation into which they will ultimately fall.

And yet,—in respect to the principle upon which the moral qualities of any one moral agent are made the ground of another's hope of justification—how do the faith, the righteousness, the merits of Christ differ from those of Abraham? The faith of Jesus, in respect to its loftiness and constancy, was indeed unparalleled even by that of his great progenitor. His obedience was perfect. But it was *his* obedience. He was perfectly righteous, for he fulfilled all righteousness. This was, to *him*, the basis of his eternal glory: for, in as much as he was obedient unto death, God highly exalted *him*, and gave him a name that is above every name.* The righteousness of Christ, moreover, is beneficial to us, and to all who bear his name: for it has given us higher conceptions of goodness, and more powerful motives to virtue:—it has raised our ideas of the divine character, and of the point to which human virtue may attain. It has given new lustre to our hopes. It has confirmed the sanctions of conscience and of God's word. It has imparted to our minds more extensive and more certain knowledge of moral subjects, and has supplied us with more ample means of becoming wise and good, and of thus securing our eternal salvation. It is in ways like *these* that the righteousness of Christ has been beneficial to his disciples; and to us, as such, has opened the gates of heaven, and given us a free access to glory and to God. But, still, the righteousness of Christ is not our righteousness, nor will it ever be imputed to us as such. And so far from saving us,—if we abuse, or neglect to improve the unnumbered and incalculable benefits which he has conferred upon us, as inducements and facilities to our own personal and practical virtue, his righteousness and merits will embitter the cup of our condemnation,—however firmly we may have been persuaded to believe otherwise,—and will make it worse for us than if he had never been sent for our redemption. For why is it less absurd and less op-

* Phil. ii. 8, 9.

posed to the general, the uniform principles of the divine government, to suppose that the merits of a prophet should be imputed to his disciples, than that the merits of a patriarch should be imputed to his posterity?—Why shall the plea 'We have Christ for our Teacher,' stand on higher, or on any other ground than the plea 'We have Abraham for our father?' And, where has Jesus ever taught us or encouraged us to unlearn, what we have learned from the prophet, that 'the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him?'*—The righteousness of Abraham or Christ,—whatever other benefits it may confer upon the children of the one, or the disciples of the other, will never open the gates of eternal life to any one who shall have neglected or despised to be righteous himself.

By the attention which we have now paid to these several subjects,—good resolutions,—a profession of religion, by becoming connected with what is technically, though somewhat arrogantly, called *the* church,—the due observance of religious rites,—diligent attendance upon religious instruction,—the holding of just speculative opinions upon the subjects of religious doctrine,—and external privileges in regard to religion,—we may have become prepared to form a tolerably just estimate of their use and value. If we weigh them impartially, we shall probably agree that they all have a value, and that the importance of some of them is great. But, let us take them all for what they are—the means, —the helps,—the instruments of righteousness, and not righteousness itself. They are all facilities furnished us to help us in becoming good, but they are not to be taken as substitutes for goodness. Am I the better,—is my neighbour the better—shall either of us be the happier for my good resolutions, when those resolutions have been no sooner made than broken—when they have been given to the winds in the very breath that uttered them?—Is my profession of religion either doing or bearing the will of God, in the hope of his favour, if, at the same time, it neither lightens the burden of my brother's cares, nor informs his mind, nor strengthens his confidence in God? Does my observance of the rites of religion satisfy his hunger, or clothe his naked children, or encourage them to make such efforts as shall enable them to provide for themselves the necessaries and comforts of life? Is it probable that I shall the more faithfully impart moral instruction to my family, my friends and associates,—that I shall more fully discharge the duties of domestic and social life,—and that I shall induce those to do so who are within the

* Ezek. xviii. 20.

sphere of my influence, by devoting my days and my nights to an indiscriminate attendance upon religious instruction? Will my hoarding up the treasures of speculative truth enrich my neighbour so long as I keep those treasures locked up in the secret chambers of my own mind? Will the righteousness of patriarch or prophet, in whose steps I have not been careful to follow, bring to my heart the peace that springs from a consciousness of duty cheerfully discharged, or of follies lamented and forsaken?

No:—these are all false grounds of religious confidence. They neither make us, nor prove us to be, benefactors of mankind: and though they may all have a tendency to lead us to the doing of righteousness, not all of them together show that we are already righteous. No one of them, nor yet all of them united, can be regarded as ultimate duties. They do not imply, still less do they prove, that we do, or bear, or abstain from any thing, in compliance with the will of God, and in the hope of his favour: and so long as they do not, they entitle no one to the character and the hopes of the righteous: for, saith the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, 'Let no man deceive you, *he that doeth righteousness is righteous.*'

SYMPATHY OF OUR SAVIOUR.

It is a very interesting part of our Saviour's character, and one to which I fear we do not often enough advert, that he was by his nature capable of sympathising, and did in fact, and in a remarkable degree, sympathise with mankind in their concerns, and particularly in their calamities; and that he was a high-priest who was touched with the feeling of human infirmities, since, though without sin, he 'was tempted in all points as we are.' In this view of his character, connected with the divinity of his mission, he was peculiarly fitted for a religious teacher.

1. His own trials were such, as enabled him not only to feel a concern in the like trials to which others were exposed, but also to adapt his instructions to the necessities of men in a state of probation. Hence it is, that, in his entrance on his ministry, soon after the account of his temptation, we find in his sermon on the Mount, the longest of his discourses on record, those maxims of prudence under trials, and those consolations and hopes, which are applicable to all the exigencies of the christian's life. According to these instructions, every act of suffering virtue is to be met by a corresponding reward. If we are called to endure perse-

cution, the recompense of fidelity is nothing less than the happiness of heaven. If, in encountering the temptations to sin, the temporary suffering be like the plucking out of the right eye, or cutting off the right hand, we are taught that the future reward will be infinitely more than commensurate with the present sacrifice. We are told, not of the pleasure of revenge, but of that which flows from disarming enmity by kindness and forbearance. We are directed not to put our trust in those treasures which are perishable, because they may tempt us to neglect that provision for the soul, of which we cannot be deprived by any accidents of time. And we are admonished not to judge our brother rashly, lest we betray our own want of self-knowledge, or expose our own hypocrisy. I might proceed to a much greater extent in this enumeration of particulars, but these examples are sufficient to show, that our Saviour addressed his disciples from a complete knowledge of the force of temptation.

2. The miracles wrought by Christ were a continual testimony of the interest he felt in human happiness. What could serve more than these to recommend him as a teacher, and to give efficacy to his instructions, by exciting the confidence and love of those to whom they were addressed? We can imagine a succession of miracles more splendid and dazzling, and more terrific; but such were not the effects he intended to produce, and they would have been ill adapted to his general design. They would not have been in harmony with his meek and unostentatious character, and with the nature of that kingdom, which came not with observation; which consisted not in pomp, and parade, and extrinsic show. Yet, for genuine moral sublimity, we can conceive nothing superiour to those operations of power, in which were blended with supernatural agency, that tender concern in human suffering, which finds direct access to the heart. Some instances, in the Hebrew Scriptures, of the visible manifestation of Divine power, are indeed awfully sublime, and perfectly adapted to the end to be produced; but, in the miracles of Christ, it seems not to have been intended that the witnesses should ever overlook the immaculate author—that man of sorrows, who was acquainted with grief. When we read so often, before his performing a miracle, of his being moved with pity, when we are told of his weeping with the sister of Lazarus, of his affectionate lamentation over Jerusalem, and of his various expressions of tenderness to his bosom companions, is there any thing wanting to command as well our love for his amiable participation in human wo, as our reverence for his beneficent exercise of power?

3. In his intercourse with his disciples, nothing could serve to

give a more powerful effect to his instructions, than that habitual condescension and kindness, which were manifested in his whole demeanour towards them. We can conceive of an inflexible justice more austere than amiable, of sincere attachment too distant and reserved to command an adequate return of love; but these virtues were so prominent and perfect, and so blended in the character of Christ, and came, if I may thus speak, so directly home to the business and bosoms of the persons engaged in his service, that they were less overawed by his supernatural character, than charmed by the purity and perfection of the man.

In all his concerns with his followers, there was every thing to secure their confidence. They were never afraid to propose to him their cases of conscience, and to inquire into the design of any thing peculiar in his religion. It was this nearness to his disciples, this uniform condescension, which made him at all times accessible, that gave a very peculiar and distinctive character to his religion. It was hence that his personal instructions breathe such a spirit of love and tenderness; instructions which we can so easily comprehend, and which give such a value to charity, above mere intellectual superiority.

When we examine the conduct of our Saviour as a teacher, in relation to those who were as yet opposed to this new religion, and consequently enemies to its author, we must see not only whether the means were innocent, but whether they were adapted to the end. Incredulity must in some cases be overcome by the direct interpositions of miraculous power, appealing to the senses; the obdurate heart, if it cannot be softened by pity, and won by persuasion, must first be impressed by fear; the profligacy of vice must be met by adequate denunciations of punishment; and that numerous class of men, who seem to be governed (as it were) by accident, and are often subjected to the will of the more adventurous or cunning, must be plucked from their seducers by seizing upon their curiosity, and retained by giving them more just conceptions of the value of their souls, by presenting the objects of faith in their most attractive forms, and by encouraging their hopes in the final rewards of fidelity.

Now it seems to me, that every one who examines the history of our Saviour's personal ministry will perceive that it was distinguished by a strict adaptation of means to the several circumstances and conditions of men, to whom he ministered. I shall only remark therefore, in general, that while he never temporised (in the bad sense of the word) with the proud, the rich, or the powerful—he always paid such regard to distinctions in society, and the prejudices founded in the different gradations of rank, as

not unnecessarily to court persecution, or to excite those worldly feelings, which he would rather correct and subdue by the humble spirit of his religion.

We see then the constant efforts of our Saviour to cultivate a temper of love among his followers, and the undeviating correspondence between his verbal instructions, and his teaching by example. If *he* watched over his erring disciples, and gently led them back into the path of duty, it was never meant that his followers in any age of the church, or in any portion of christendom, should bite and devour one another. The love which he taught and exemplified, is that which distinguishes between the offender and the offence. Never do we find any countenance for giving up a wandering brother to the waywardness of a perverted mind, or for driving him farther from the right path by the arm of violence. If he go astray, we are to leave the ninety and nine which have not gone astray, and search for him, and if possible, recover him. If he be prodigal, and lay waste the fair inheritance of virtue which he might have possessed, and despise the chastened pleasures of religion, choosing rather the mad intoxication of sensual riot and excess,—yet, if the returning light of reason and religion should burst upon him, and he should thus see the real deformity of his character, we are to receive the penitent, not with repulsive distrust, but with marked expressions of joy.

The tender concern which our Saviour felt for his disciples, and still feels for all who acknowledge him as their master and teacher, demands on our part a corresponding love. But how is the sincerity of our love to be tried? We shall all acknowledge that strong professions are of themselves of little value; and, though we should ever avoid indulging unreasonable suspicions, yet we sometimes find the most clamorous pretensions proceeding from the most hollow hearts. We are to judge none except by that least deceptive test, which our Saviour himself furnishes: 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' That man, therefore, in whom we find professions of love to Christ, united with genuine love to his neighbour, and those individual, domestic and social virtues which endear him to his family and associates; who repairs to the moral instructions of his divine teacher for rules which he is to apply to his various relations in life, and does every thing from deep convictions of duty, settling all his cases of conscience, as far as practicable, by the example and the maxims of Christ,—although his devotions may never kindle into rapture, and his expressions of love to the Saviour may never glow with that fervour, with which they do from the lips of some good men, yet gives the best evidence of his sincerity,

that with our ignorance of the human heart, we can ever obtain. But he, on the contrary, whose ardour in professions of love to Christ seems limited only by the limited power of language to express them; who deems all devotions cold, unless they are couched in 'words that burn;'—if, at the same time, he does not love his brother whom he hath seen; if he is not alive to those tender charities which bind us to each other; if his selfishness is visible in all those offices which he performs, under pretence of personal kindness or extended philanthropy,—has not a genuine love for Christ; and I am not casuist enough to exculpate him from some share in the earnest expostulations of our Saviour with the scribes and pharisees.

But I would not be understood to invite, or even to justify any unnecessary decisions on the characters of those about us; and the best use which can be made of such rules and illustrations as I have just briefly brought together in contrast, is to bring us to a close self-examination, rather than to make us too curious and obtrusive in our inquiries into the professions and conduct of others.

I have said that the love of our Saviour to his disciples demands a corresponding love. It is lamentably true, that we are prone to be very deficient in the exercise of this affection. Though the shocking expressions which we sometimes hear uttered by those, who have undergone a sudden change in their religious views and feelings, and who are strongly excited by looking back on their past indifference and neglect, are the result of a diseased frame of mind, (often produced by artful exaggeration,) thus mistaking coldness for hatred by the force of contrast, when ecstacy has taken place of indifference,—yet, if we examine our own hearts, we shall often find too much of that coldness, and want of lively gratitude to our Saviour, which *they* may choose to call hatred. Thus, at the same time, we perceive there is a fault existing, the opposite to that of coldness, and though by no means so common, yet far more obtrusive, and perhaps more mischievous in its consequences. I mean that extravagant rhapsody of address and invocation, which is sometimes directed to the Saviour, and those familiar terms of endearment, which are alike offensive, and irreverent, when their object is no less than the son of God. These extravagances are commonly the result of the most exaggerated conceptions of the malignant nature of the human heart, and of the awful vengeance of God, contrasted with the clemency of Christ, which interposes between the anger of God and the demerit of man. And here it is to be apprehended, that the extraordinary supposition prevailing among so large a portion of christians, of two distinct and oppo-

site natures in Christ, has had no small influence in countenancing those irrational ecstacies and absurd, if not impious raptures, which so often flow from the lips of enthusiasts. Add to this, their overwhelming views of sin, which are founded not always so much in wicked purposes indulged, as in certain disordered fancies of a natural alienation from God, and enmity to his government, and that very worst contradiction of all common sense and common sensibility,—of a natural hatred of all his moral perfections, and their belief too that there is no mercy, no residue of the spirit to pardon and restore them,—and why should we wonder, that, with phrenzied delight, they throw themselves into the arms of a compassionate Saviour, and exhaust their vocabulary of terms to express their joy, and hope, and longing desires; and that under this false and unnatural excitement, they sometimes forget all that is reverent and becoming towards the author of salvation. Far be it from me to provoke any thing like ridicule against any sincere christians, who have passed through trials like these, and have not sunk under the weight of their awful convictions of guilt, which consists, perhaps, in nothing more than the common infirmities of human nature. But it is deplorable, (and it is no fiction, for such cases have been witnessed) to see an amiable fellow being who has caught a contagion like this, and having neither strength of mind nor vigour of constitution to bear up under this factitious but oppressive burden, is racked by tortures, which hurry him off in a phrenzy of delirium, or bear him down by their constant pressure to the depths of despair; and there, lingering through the slow gradations of uninterrupted and increasing melancholy, he is at last delivered from the depths of wo only by the kind messenger of death.

It belongs to all who profess and call themselves christians, while they avoid whatever seems unbecoming in the mode of shewing their love to Christ, to use their best endeavours to fall behind none in the sincerity of their affection. It is certain we shall not be such as he would have us to be, if we do not bring into exercise our best efforts to acquire and cherish that temper of love, which will become a habit, only by the constancy with which it is maintained. The christian's life is called a warfare; but it is now a warfare, not so much against external enemies, as against our own passions and prejudices. If these are kept in check, all the auxiliary foes, which are nothing more than the various temptations which would keep us in bondage to the world, are disarmed of all their power. Encouragement to active goodness is every where given us, as well by the example of Christ, as by the hopes and promises of that religion which he

revealed. The favour of God is withheld from none, who do not abandon themselves; and, after sincere faith which cannot fail to be an operative principle, all virtue seems to consist in acting up to the spirit of that exalted being whom we acknowledge for our teacher and by whom we hope to be saved. While therefore we should guard against that sloth, which would make us satisfied with small advances in the christian life, and would prompt us to ascribe our deficiencies and sins to the imperfection of human nature, we must not, on the contrary, too readily despair under the pressure of trials, remembering that we have a high-priest who was tried like ourselves, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

WORTH OF THE UNDISPUTED TRUTHS OF CHRISTIANITY.

In the multitude of doctrines which Christians profess to derive from their religion, there are a few which enter into the composition of every system of opinion and faith. They are those which teach the existence, providence and moral government of a perfect Being, and the certainty of a future life. Although these truths are common to every set of religious opinions, they are by no means valued alike by every religious denomination. By the great body of christians they are hardly allowed to belong in a peculiar manner to revelation. They are not perhaps positively disowned as coming from that source, but as *christian* truths they certainly receive no due regard from the minds of those, who, divided into distinct and opposing sects, fasten all their attention upon those points and opinions which constitute the respective differences of religious faith. To value them aright, to estimate the importance of a revelation of God's moral character and man's future existence, requires a severe effort of mind, even from those who believe these truths to be the essential truths of christianity. For to have any thing like a just conception of their immense value, we must bring ourselves to comprehend fully what must have been the state of men's minds without the knowledge of them. But, as habitual believers in Revelation, we have become so accustomed to look upon the present state of things in reference to, and as inseparably connected with a future state, that we forget how entirely and exclusively this future state is a matter of revelation. It is the delightful employment of religious feeling to consider all the appearances of nature as intimating those glorious and benevolent designs which the gospel has disclosed. The first common

truths of revelation are connected with the objects around us by a thousand beautiful and affecting analogies. We stand among the works of God and listen to the echo which they give to the voice of his Son, until, as it grows louder and louder to our ears, we mistake it for a distinct, independent utterance. We are thus led to consider the certainly very equivocal intimations of natural religion as striking and decisive declarations, which must always have been as evident, as well to those who have lived without a revelation as to us; and we entirely lose sight of the fact that peculiar light and assistance are now enjoyed. And further. The truths to which we refer are so simple, they are stated so clearly and explicitly, they have so burst forth in the bare act of being revealed—the knowledge of them has become so diffused like light through our minds and throughout the community, that they have partaken of the nature of the commonest blessings—of a birthright, and we find it very difficult to conceive the state of a mind to which they are unknown. How must these difficulties in the way of acquiring a proper sense of the value of the simple truths respecting God and the immortality of man, as *revealed* truths, be increased in the case of those who have been brought to believe that certain other points are of paramount importance—to consider, for instance, the doctrine of three persons or distinctions in the Deity, as of far higher value than the revelation of God as the Father of his creatures—to esteem the belief that the happiness of a future life depends upon some kind of treaty or contract between these divine persons, to be far more important than the conviction that every one will be judged according to his works; and who, in short have accustomed their minds to the reception of doctrines, which, if supposed to be true, at once destroy the value of revelation, and almost make it a question whether the uncertainty of heathen darkness be not preferable.

Although it be thus difficult rightly to estimate the value and importance of the doctrines of our immortality and responsibleness as doctrines of revelation, yet the obstacles in our way are not too great to be overcome. It requires indeed a strong mental exertion to tear ourselves away from all our present associations and stand in the situation of those who were without God and without hope in the world. But such an exertion will be successful. Its result will be to make even those who are disposed to consider the merest points of speculation and faith as of the highest importance, even such acknowledge, that although christianity do nothing more than make us acquainted with God and a future life, it is still of indescribable value, and it will not be left to be conceived that there are any other truths more worthy our heartiest acceptation.

Let us shut out for a moment the light of revelation. We shall then see if the objects in the midst of which we stand are of themselves luminous with those truths which it is most necessary for man to know. Can we of ourselves, without the assistance of our religion, learn the certainty of another life and the government of one perfect and Supreme Being?

The state of things in which we are placed is great and glorious. But in all its greatness and glory, it is subject to a continual and wide decay. Every thing grows old and vanishes. Our own species are exposed to the one great evil. Individual after individual, family after family, generation after generation disappear from the face of the earth, to be known no more forever. There is nothing which revolts at this universal sentence of death, but the secret desires of the human soul after a continued existence. But we know not whether these aspirations be any thing more than what must spring from that love of life necessary to our present being. And although we might at times, by our repeated contemplations, feel the intellectual principle within to be too noble, too exalted, too opposite to the dull inertness of material objects, to share a similar fate, yet all these feelings would be put to flight on the first near instance of our mortality,—when we should see our most intimate and respected friend fall at our side, beneath the blow of the universal destroyer, see all life and expression fade away from the countenance with which we had identified so much intellectual power, and the frame in which had dwelt the fulness of some mental faculty stop all its movements like those of a machine. Our most confident hopes could not stand before such near and appalling proofs of the total destruction of man.

And as it regards the providence of one God perfectly wise and good—how much should we know without the aid of Revelation? With this aid, we have become acquainted with the grand argument arising from the uniformity of design manifest throughout creation. Without it, we are in a world in which indeed the marks of one great and wise design are numerous, and we might probably be disposed to acknowledge the existence of one wise and powerful God, were it not that the evils to which we are constantly exposed, the pain and suffering of our condition,—were it not that these, heavy and frequent, oppose themselves to that one great truth. Sorrow and suffering come close to us—into our hearts, and the feelings they produce obviate the conclusions of the understanding. It is hardly to be supposed but that we should feel that dark and malignant influences were mingled with the providence over human things.

But how has been the fact? To our reasonable suppositions

of what man would be without some express revelation, the past fully testifies by showing us what he was. Unassisted reason has been confessedly unable to drive away the uncertainty that brooded over human condition. Men found themselves in a world full of the effects of some stupendous cause, not the decaying monuments of a departed power, but the instruments of some ever present but invisible energies. Every object became to them instinct with divinity, until, overcome by fear and superstition, they seemed to themselves to be in a vast assembly of gods ; gods, whom they feared for their power, but who in every thing else, in their moral natures, were of like infirmity with themselves. How thoroughly debasing must have been those religions, whose support was fear, and the objects of which were beings superior to man in power and presenting in their characters the blackest deformities of human passion ! Such religions did exist every where before the coming of God's messenger. While the imaginations of the ignorant consigned each thing in nature to the guardianship of a peculiar spirit, the existence of two ruling principles, good and evil, has been one of the last conclusions of philosophy. The enlightened, the more reflecting among the ancients encouraged the religion of the multitude. They regarded not the character of the popular superstitions so long as they furnished sanctions to civil government. In their own minds they gave up gods and men to the current of fate ; or the superior being in whom they might believe, was of too elevated a nature to notice the imperfections and changes of this world. The common notion of a future state as a part of the prevailing religious systems was likewise encouraged. It is not to be denied that such a notion every where existed. The popular conceptions of a future state of existence were however sufficiently low and debasing in their nature to make a clearer discovery in the highest degree necessary. Still it is doubtful whether among the majority there did exist any firm and settled belief on this point. Whatever might have been their hopes and wishes, there was death before them, death in all its darkness and corruption. Take them at those seasons when a belief in a God and a future life must have been of inestimable value and when the strength of it may be tried. Enter the domestic circle just broken by death, but the light of hope and consolation is not there. There is a letter of Pliny's giving an account of the sudden death of the daughter of a friend. There are in it the expressions of the deepest sorrow, but not the slightest allusion to those invaluable consolations which a belief in another existence would have afforded. There is also a striking passage which shows the weakness of even the popular belief in a divine providence and a fu-

ture life, in the same author's description of the eruption of Vesuvius. In the horrors of that scene, he says '*Multi* ad deos manus tollere; *plures* nusquam jam deos ullos, æternamque illam et novissimam noctem mundo, interpretabantur.'

With all this darkness and uncertainty enveloping his highest interests, man became the divided prey of superstition and scepticism. There were no promises of happiness, no motives to virtue. When we consider how peculiarly this was the case in that age in which it pleased God to reveal himself, we shall have some conception of the value of a revelation which bids man no longer acknowledge an alliance with the dust, but to consider himself as the child of an infinite and perfect being, the heir of immortality. Christianity comes with the most glorious attestations and reveals to us those ties which bind us to God and to Heaven. It addresses man as an intelligent, moral being, as possessed of those powers which he is conscious of possessing. Virtue and happiness are the great ends of human existence. And can any means be conceived of, better calculated to promote these ends, than the settled conviction of our relation to God as our father and judge; and to eternity, as the future scene of our existence? Christianity as revealing these relations set before us, it is true, but a few plain, simple truths. But they are all important, for to the influence of these truths alone, all the true happiness and virtue which are among men can be traced. In one form or another they bear upon every possible condition of our nature. They directly enforce and strengthen every obligation which we can be under to God, to man, or to ourselves. They are fitted to our moral nature. They speak to the consciences of men. As the means of happiness too, they present the most glorious views of man's nature and destination. They animate him in duty. They console him in sorrow. Now our friends may die; and as we stand by their graves, the conviction of another state of being descends into the depths of our souls, under the most powerful weight of evidence. The truth of the declaration of another life is written in the moral purity of the characters of Christ and his apostles.

But if this be the nature of the truths under consideration, if they do so perfectly adapt themselves to human conditions and human wants, it must seem strange that Christians throughout all ages of the Church, have been so little disposed to acknowledge their true value; that they have not only agreed in the importance of any truths rather than these, but have even allowed unbelievers to appropriate to themselves these great truths as the discoveries of reason, and have denied the Christian name to those who believed them solely on the authority of revelation.

The plain fact was this. Christianity when it came did not find men conscious of their necessities, in that precise state of suspense, anxiety and doubt, which would have led them eagerly to embrace these plain truths as incomparably the most important accession of knowledge which they could obtain. They were either given up to superstition or were following the phantoms of a false philosophy. The common principles of our religion did undoubtedly have great effect upon the characters and happiness of those who received it. Yet many of the first converts were disposed from the feelings and opinions cultivated previous to their conversion, to consider religion as a thing which must always be attended with a considerable degree of obscurity and mystery. Most of those who succeeded the apostles as christian writers were converted philosophers, men who believed that spiritual truths must ever call for the utmost labours of the intellect. The works of these men have been the sources of religious knowledge, through the different periods of the christian church. The simple doctrines of God's government and of a future life fitted themselves at once, and with the utmost ease, to the comprehension of all. But with a strong tendency to speculation and a love of mystery, men have looked for something striking,—something, which while it invited their notice would prove its claims to their respect and their faith by mocking all the efforts of their understanding. Now to whatever men devote their thoughts, to that they attach the most importance. It is of no consequence how trifling and insignificant the subject, which they consider, may be. It swells and increases under the continued contemplation of the mind. And all other subjects, no matter how important, lose all their weight and dignity. In this way men have been led to bow down to their own vain imaginations and to *despise* the truth; not absolutely to *reject* it, but to consider it of very little importance. The history of the christian church is unfortunately the most striking example of this melancholy perversion. The social obligations of men as children of one common father have been forgotten in the strife about points of no moment; and some nice metaphysical subtilty has been sufficient to choke the flow of the commonest feelings of humanity. The grand moral principles of christianity have been passed by, and mankind have devoted themselves to insignificant questions and idle speculations; and from these, and these alone, have arisen the sects and controversies which have thrown such a deep disgrace upon our religion. Christians, Protestant Christians at least, are constantly claiming simplicity as a characteristic of the faith. Yet they have not been satisfied with a steady performance of the duties resulting from its plain truths;

they have insisted upon the possession of some indistinct feeling or rapture founded on some inexplicable proposition. Yet there are moments when the magnified importance of these mysterious articles of faith sinks into nothing. There are seasons when God undertakes to teach men anew the value of the doctrines of his providence and government and man's future account. It is related that in the dreadful pestilence with which the city of London was visited in 1665, when the plague was at its most awful height, the people under one deep and unmingled impression of their accountableness to a supreme Judge, rushed into the temples of God in one indiscriminate multitude. The nice and petty distinctions of religious faith were forgotten, and their hearts were melted down and poured out in one tide of humility and prayer upon the altar of God. But one of the first evidences of the diminution of the pestilence was the splitting of them into their old religious parties. As the sense of a common frailty and dependance was weakened, the division lines of the sects began to appear.

But there are other ways by which men may be brought to recognize the importance of those truths which Unitarian Christians deem the great essentials of Christianity. When men have been called to maintain the truth of our religion against the assaults of unbelievers, they have been taught what were the true principles of the system they defended, and their value. This striking and well known fact has thus been concisely stated. 'As the opposers of the Gospel have frequently had recourse to arguments ad hominem, and have taken advantage from modern systems and from the writings of Divines of this or that persuasion; so the defenders of Revelation have often found themselves under a necessity of reducing things to the venerable Christianity of the New Testament, and of adventuring no farther; and of declaring the rest as not essential to the cause and to the controversy.'

In the gradual improvement of the mind, mankind will at last learn that plainness and simplicity, not obscurity and mystery, are the characteristics and recommendations of truth. Every one sees that the proposition that all men are born free and equal is a very clear and simple one. But clear and simple as it is, men have for some time felt that it is of the utmost importance too. There is but one country where the attempt to make it a practical truth, to adjust it to the common relations of life, has yet proved successful. And here the event was gained by a loss of human blood and happiness not to be calculated. Other nations it is feared have yet to pay a similar price. And although enormous corruptions of religion are at this age uniting with human

passions in the violation of the rights of mankind, yet it is to be hoped the primitive purity of religion is to be restored at no such bloody cost;—that reason will gain for the simple truths of Christianity the universal acknowledgment of their supreme value and importance, with all the blessed effects of such an acknowledgment, at no other sacrifice than that of creeds and formulas of faith.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

Sir—I send you another extract from Gisbert's Christian Eloquence. The title of the chapter is *De la Popularité de l'Eloquence.* By the word *Popularité*, for which our language has no corresponding term, and which I have translated by the phrase *a popular manner* or *style*,—he means; a style of thought, sentiment and expression entirely adapted to, and within the reach of the *people*—i. e. the great body of the community, the majority of our congregations. This is a signification a little foreign from the usual sense of our word *popular;* but I have been obliged to adopt it for want of a better. I infer indeed from a remark of L'Enfant, that the author has given rather a novel sense to the word in his own language—'Il se déclare,' says he, 'pour la *Popularité; c'est son mot*—mais c'est une belle popularité que la sienne.'

I have abridged the portions of the chapter which I now send, omitting some unimportant digressions, and especially two very long examples from Chrysostom. Such as it is, I hope it may be neither unacceptable nor useless.

ON THE POPULAR STYLE IN PREACHING.

How little understood among preachers is the true popular style of eloquence! I speak of the most distinguished, and those of the greatest reputation. They have all the other requisite qualifications of an orator. What they say is always sensible, always christian, and they make use of a pure, elegant, dignified style. What do they want then? A manner suited to affect the common people. Between the preacher and the hearer, it often happens that there is no intercourse, no sympathy. The preacher is elevated into a superior region, while his hearers are seated in regions far beneath him. Every thing which he says is beautiful, all that he says is scriptural; but nothing that he says is within the capacity of the people.

What do the people make of such preaching? They listen,

they are struck with the musick of the voice, the beauty of the gesture, the spirit of the declamation; sometimes they go further, they admire, they applaud. But what do they admire? what do they applaud? that is what they know nothing of.

It was said of a famous preacher, that he was a river of eloquence; but a river which always flowed above the heads of his hearers; not the least little rill descended to the understanding or to the heart of the multitude. All admired him; few understood him.

It is not for the people to raise themselves to the preacher: the preacher must descend to the people. The prophet Elisha fitted and proportioned himself to the widow's son, whom he wished to raise to life; in like manner, accommodate yourself to the understanding of the people, whom you wish to raise from the death of sin to the life of righteousness.

To prove one an eloquent man, it is not enough that he appears so to the court, he must appear so to the city—I might say to the village. The most certain proof is, that he appears so to the multitude.* For it is the multitude which is the most certain judge of perfect eloquence. The perfection of eloquence is seen in the impression which is made on the mind and heart. And whenever the multitude is thus touched and agitated, it is evident that the orator has done all which eloquence is capable of doing.

The office of eloquence is comprehended in these three things,—to instruct, to please, to move. To know how and by what methods to effect all this, belongs indeed only to masters of the art; but to decide whether it is actually done, belongs to the public, to the multitude,—from whose decision there lies no appeal.

A preacher is addressing a large audience; all are attentive to his words; a deep and expressive silence pervades the assembly; the discourse meets their approbation, receives their warm assent, produces an emotion of indescribable pleasure, and binds the attention by a secret charm, as if by an invisible chain. They sadden, they weep, they rejoice,—they feel shame, repentance, admiration, fear,—they are moved, agitated, transported. What would you have more? and why would you hesitate to pronounce him a great preacher? To ascertain first the opinion of men of taste? But do you not know that men of taste and the multitude never differ on the question of real eloquence?†

* Id enim est summi oratoris, summum oratorem populo videri. Cic. de orat.

† Quid est quod expectetur docti alicujus sententia? Quod enim probat multitudo, hoc idem doctis probandum est.

Hoc specimen est popularis judicii, in quo nunquam fuit populo cum doctis intelligentibusque dissentio. Cic. de or.

It is by the sounds which the instrument sends forth, that we judge of the skill of him who touches its strings. And just so it is from the emotions which the discourse excites, that we judge of the merit of the preacher. It is not even necessary to hear him; it is sufficient just to observe, by a glance over the assembly, how he is listened to.

When Crassus and Antony were contending for the supremacy in eloquence, if you had put the question to the Roman people which was the greatest orator; they would either have hesitated between the two; or some would have said it is Crassus, and others, it is Antony. But I venture to assert, says Cicero, that not an individual could have been found to prefer Philip, though a most polished, sweet and agreeable speaker. If you inquire at Paris whether Bourdaloue be not one of the first preachers in France, all Paris would reply without hesitation or exception, that he is. So true is it, that he is the great preacher, who is such in the estimation of the multitude.

You will ask me then, do you make no difference between an intelligent hearer and him that is not so? A very great one,—and I have already stated it. The educated and enlightened hearer not only finds himself affected, pleased, excited; but he perceives at the same time by what secret springs the orator produces these different effects; while to the uneducated hearer, it is all a hidden mystery. He feels indeed at the bottom of his soul, the same things which have affected the other; but he has no conception of that process of art by which the effect is produced. In a word, the intelligent hearer judges of the orator's merits by his feelings and by his knowledge; the ignorant by his feelings only. But they come to the same conclusions, and the judgment of the one is as infallible as that of the other.

It is plain then, that you never can be a good preacher, so long as you appear so only to the men of education and taste. These do not constitute the multitude, whose favour alone can adjudge the glorious title of a real orator. Cicero was so sensible of this, that he said; In other matters I desire the approbation of the learned; but in eloquence give me that of the people.

When Antimachus, the poet, was one day reading one of his works to a large number of persons assembled together, he perceived at length that they had all left him but Plato. No matter, said he, I will read on; Plato himself is audience sufficient. He was right. A poem is not a work within the capacity of every one; it is above the intelligence of ordinary minds; it is designed for the approbation of a few; but a discourse formed by the rules of rhetoric, a sermon, ought to be adapted essentially and entirely to the information and the feelings of the people.

If Demosthenes had suddenly found himself in a like situation, deserted while speaking by all his hearers but one, though that one had been Plato, yet, believe me, his speech would have failed him, and he would have broken off his harangue at once. It is the multitude that is harangued, it is the people that is preached to; and it is consequently necessary that the discourse be such as they can understand, relish, approve and even applaud.

On this ground I lay it down without hesitation as an important maxim, that one is no orator who has not attained what I have called the popular style—because it is essentially his office to speak to the people, and his purpose always to speak what is adapted to persuade.

If his duty were only to speak to a small select number, of a very refined and critical judgment, perhaps he might dispense with the popular style: but he is designed for the people. This is what the preacher should never lose sight of in the composition of his discourse; he ought to be continually saying to himself, it is the people whom I am to address.

When we thus say, the *people*, we mean the majority of mankind; not only those who are of obscure birth, and of a mechanical employment; but likewise all who have not applied themselves to study or science, all who have neither much understanding, nor very great penetration, nor very refined taste; all these are the people. How large a part of the people, then, is oftentimes made up of the most noble and splendid of the auditors!

Beware of forming false ideas of this popularity, without which one cannot possess true eloquence. Do not imagine that it consists in being low and creeping; there is an infinite distance between the popular and the mean style. There is nothing mean, nothing vulgar in the christian pulpit; all there ought to be great, noble, dignified; every thing should accord with the majesty and greatness which become the ambassador of Christ and the minister of the Gospel.

Neither is it a coarse vulgar style, without elegance or taste. Popular eloquence is an equal enemy to what is coarse as to what is grovelling. Elegance belongs to it, and it loves ingenious thought and refined sentiments. A preacher badly educated makes use of expressions taken from the dregs of the people, modes of speech which betray his low origin; he fills his discourse with comparisons and similitudes drawn from objects which present to the mind low and vulgar images; he expresses himself with impoliteness and rusticity. Should you say that such a preacher has the popular style? Say that he is low, that he

is coarse, that he is clownish; say that he is the preacher, not of the people, but of the mob; and you will do him justice.

Nothing can be more erroneous than the notion which some preachers form of the popular manner. Provided that they give themselves certain airs of familiarity in the pulpit, and assume a free colloquial tone; provided that they come down to an equality with their hearers, and speak in a careless off-hand way, they call that, the true popular manner. They mistake; this familiar style, this free and easy way, is not at all suited to the gravity and dignity of christian eloquence.

The popular style, again, is not the same with the simple. A preacher may have the one, without the other; with this difference, that his style may be simple without being popular, but it cannot be popular without being simple.

It is with simplicity in discourse, as with simplicity in the intercourse of the world. We call a man simple in his manners and behaviour, who knows neither duplicity, nor disguise nor imposture; a man who has nothing affected, nothing glossed over or made up about him. If your discourse is of this character, it has all the ingredients of a charming simplicity.

In order to full success, it is necessary to unite together several different kinds of simplicity: Simplicity of design, and of style, in embellishment and in argument. Care must be taken to avoid the bad taste of those preachers, who bring together, in a confused and undigested mass, every thought that occurs to them, and take every thing to be good, provided it only fills out the discourse. This mixture of heterogeneous matter is fatal to every thing like simplicity.

Where will the preacher find models of this lovely, but noble and majestic simplicity? Where can he find more perfect than in the discourses of Jesus as recorded in the gospels? Who has ever spoken more sublime truths, and who has ever spoken more simply? The other books of scripture, divine as they are, make no approach to it.

What then is this popular manner? And what shall we say constitutes this noble, elevated, grave, dignified, simple, refined popularity of speech, without which no discourse deserves to be honoured with the name of eloquent? It consists in the preacher's conforming every thing he has to say to the common and ordinary manner of thinking and feeling, as it prevails among the generality of men. Aim at this conformity; express things as people feel them, and as they commonly feel them; you will then be on the high road to the popular manner.

Some preachers imagine they have accomplished a great object, when they say things which nobody but themselves would

ever have thought of, and express them in a manner which no one would expect. It would seem that such men are inflated with the pride of the Pharisee. Thanks be to God, that we are not as other men are; we do not think like them, we do not speak like them. But they have fallen into the most deplorable error, the most ruinous and extravagant mistake.

Let it be then your chief care, your main ambition, to think as other men think; to feel and speak as others feel and speak: so that every one who hears you might say, I should have treated the subject exactly as the preacher did, he made use of the very expressions that I should have chosen. When you have reached this, you may boast upon good ground, of having attained all that is the most difficult, and at the same time the most beautiful, in eloquence.

There are certain sentiments and feelings upon every subject which are common to all men. Make it your study to discover and unfold these. Ask yourself, what would all men think upon this subject, if they followed the light of their reason; how would they feel, if they gave themselves up to the natural emotions of their hearts? They would think and feel thus; let such, then, be my thoughts and feelings.

There exists among men a universal reason, from which these common sentiments and feelings derive their origin, which belongs to all times, to all places, and to all men; which never changes, but is forever the same, partaking in a manner of the immutability of the infinite knowledge of the supreme mind, of which it is a ray and emanation. Whatever, in our discourses, shall be conformable to this universal reason, will be always good and beautiful, and equally agreeable to the taste of all nations and of all ages. This is that superior and reigning reason, which the orator should consult, and from whose immense resources he should draw every thing he has to say, and the manner of saying it.

It is not the taste of one nation or of one age which should be your guide. Particular tastes, whatever prevalence they may have, are sometimes excessively bad, and thus we find them pass by like the occasional torrents of spring time, or rather, like the fashions which are constantly changing and succeeding each other. To-day one mode of preaching is in fashion, to-morrow another. He who strives to accommodate himself to these different tastes, and roll round with the times, loses himself in the attempt, because they are particular and occasional tastes; but he never goes astray who follows the universal taste; this is subject to no change; it is not a fashion: it is essentially and necessarily a good taste, because it is founded on that universal reason, which is as sure and infallible, as it is unchangeable.

Let this then be the principal study of the christian orator. Whenever he would compose a sermon, he should begin by searching deeply into the minds and hearts of his hearers, to discover what each thinks and feels on the subject before him. These ideas and feelings exist in the hearer, but without being perceived by him, because they lie in his mind indistinctly, undefined. But as the preacher proceeds to develope them, the hearer opens his eyes,—he becomes conscious of the existence of a thousand things, to which he had never before given his attention. I did not think of it, he says to himself, but so it is. It is a source of exceeding pleasure to him, to have the preacher thus take him by the hand, as it were, and go on with him from thought to thought, from feeling to feeling, while he finds within himself an echo to every thing he hears.

The sun does not create the colours of the objects on which it shines; it only renders them visible to the eyes of those who gaze. So it is with the skilful preacher. He does not produce in his hearers new ideas or new feelings; he only brings out, awakens, renders sensible, those which are already there. As soon as the preacher makes a remark, the hearer assents and acknowledges it as his own; he subscribes to it at once, because his mind and his heart bear loud testimony that it is true.

It is the part of perfect eloquence never to suspend or interrupt this internal assent, this secret *yes*, with which the soul declares its conviction and assent. Then, every thing persuades, every thing convinces; nothing is said in vain. The hearer cannot resist the force of what he feels to be true; and it is not so much by what the preacher said, that he suffers himself to be persuaded, as by his own mind and heart, which say the same things.

This sympathy of the hearer with the preacher, this mutual and reciprocal testimony which they render to the truth, the one in proposing and the other in assenting to it, this it is which renders christian eloquence always victorious. To say the truth, it is only such preachers that ever make deep impression, and effect the reformation of men; because it is only such that possess the secret of effectual persuasion.

It is not enough, however, for the good preacher in this manner to select his subjects and his thoughts; he must further take care to express them in a manner accommodated to the common mode of expression.

If you would excel in this manner, never make use of any word which is not common, which is not in use in the actual intercourse of life. Every far fetched expression, every phrase too curiously culled, of too new a fabric, and which has not received

the stamp of custom, ought to have no currency in the dominions of true eloquence.

Do not adopt the bad taste of the Roman orator who sought to be very refined in his selection of words, and imagined that to speak well, was to speak in language that was very little used: *recte loqui putabat esse, inusitate loqui.* Remember that custom always has been and ever must be the sovereign mistress of language, to which it is necessary implicitly to submit. I do not say, that every word which is in common use may be admitted into your preaching; for there are low and vulgar words, which should be absolutely banished from it; but none which is not common must be admitted.

Further still: make use of no figure or mode of expression, which is not, as I may say, an ebullition or sally of nature herself. Study to discover in what sorts of figurative diction and forms of speech nature expresses herself in her various situations, and learn to express yourself accordingly. You will thus present faithful copies of the common modes of thinking and speaking, and so cannot fail to adapt yourself to the understanding and sympathy of the people.

We meet with preachers, however, who, by their modes of expression, take out of the reach of the people the things of all others in the world best adapted to affect them. By refining and subtilizing, and affecting to speak in an extraordinary way, they so denaturalize the thoughts they present, and in a manner destroy their identity, that the hearer comprehends nothing of them, and recognizes in them no single natural feature. I know nothing that more unfits a man for the pulpit than this refining and quintessence-hunting spirit.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

Sir—I have translated the following extract from Heinrichs' Prolegomena with the hope that it may be interesting and useful to readers of the Disciple. It is, I think, a lucid exposition of the character and design of the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is not to be expected that every sentiment expressed in it will be universally approved; but there are probably not many, who will not receive from it a more satisfactory insight into the contents of this most difficult part of the New Testament.

ON THE CHARACTER AND DESIGN OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

Translated from Heinrichs' Prolegomena.

The leading, if not the only motive of the Apostle in the composition of this epistle, was the fear that the Jewish converts whom he addressed, would desert the standard of the new religion, under which they had enlisted. This fear was founded on two considerations. One was, that they were beset with doubts whether the new religion supplied by its excellence the loss which they seemed to have sustained in giving up the religion of their ancestors,—the religion held sacred by Abraham, and all their venerable countrymen, to whom their minds were continually recurring. The other was, that they were obliged to encounter the severest calamities and persecutions, which were likely to have the greater effect upon minds already wavering, or inclining to the same course to which these persecutions were designed to compel them. Neither of these facts is surprising. For the new doctrine could not boast of being introduced by the immediate agency of angels, or by those magnificent and sublime appearances of nature, in the midst of which they gloried that their old religion had been delivered by the venerable Moses on Mount Sinai. They could not now receive the same delight as formerly from the solemn grandeur of rites and ceremonies. They had no splendid temple, no high priest, no sacrifice. Nay: they beheld a new master of the humblest origin, suffering in his life the most cruel pains and indignities, and closing his career by an ignominious death. Is it strange that they were slow in recognizing in him the authority of one, whom they were to regard as a messenger from God, whom they were to venerate more than Moses, the prophets, and the angels, to whom, in fine, they were to pay divine respect and honour, as the true Messiah promised to their fathers?

What chiefly occupied and agitated their minds, however, was an anxious concern lest, now that sacrifices were abolished by the new religion, and no other way was apparent to them of appeasing the anger of God, the number of their sins should increase to such a vast amount as to provoke the divine vengeance, and expose them to awful punishments in this world, and greater in that which was to come. This fear filled them with doubt, solicitude, and distress; and it was now not merely springing up in their minds, but had taken deep root in them. At the same time they were surrounded by Jews, who were indignant that they had betrayed the cause of their most sacred law, the law of their ancestors,

Of these Jews, some were continually representing to them the splendour of their high priests and of their sacrifices; and reproaching them with having foolishly deserted these glorious scenes. Others were more violent; and by accusations, by plundering their goods, by bonds, and other methods of cruelty endeavoured to render their lives miserable. These afflictions, however, they had learned to bear, and to account as nothing, ch. x. 34. Their virtue and constancy had been confirmed by enduring trials. But they could not help being stung with the incessant, taunting representations of the splendour and dignity of the religion of their ancestors; they could not bear to be pointed at and ridiculed as deserters, apostates, betrayers of their most sacred law; and there was reason to fear that they would voluntarily renounce that religious community, of which they had recently become members. In my opinion, they would have renounced it, had not the apostle given them timely admonition by sending this epistle to all the churches.

To admonish his readers with effect, in this critical state of things, would be, he was aware, an extremely difficult task. He was obliged to use, at the same time, the language of instruction, of reproof, of consolation, and of admonition. The minds of his readers were to be gained over by methods entirely foreign to our times. He was convinced that he could effect little or nothing, should he attempt, by arguments drawn from the schools of the philosophers, to prove the christian religion to be our kindest friend, the guide of life, the parent of good morals, the guardian of virtue. He felt the necessity of pursuing a different path; and of making use of other methods of conviction, and other topics of consolation. It was necessary that he should institute a comparison between the new religion and the old law which they had renounced; estimate it on the principles of the latter, and make it evident that the old religion could boast of no excellence which did not belong to the new; and that it was in many respects far inferior to it in the grandeur and sublimity of the objects it presented to view. It was incumbent on him to shew that the new religion was introduced by a messenger divinely commissioned, not only the interpreter of the sacred writings, but superior to other messengers of God, angels, prophets, &c. the Messiah, the son of God, exhibiting, as in a mirror, the image of the divine perfections. He was to shew that the sufferings of the founder of the new religion were his glory, rather than his disgrace. He was to make it appear that the new religion, too, could boast of its temple, of its sacrifice, and of a higher and more perfect chief priest, who had a mild and merciful disposition—who was not unwilling to help the infirmities of men. Above all, it was ne-

cessary to eradicate that capital, deeply rooted error, that no method was secured, after the abolition of sacrifices, by which pardon could be obtained. This he does by assuring them that the favour of God was recovered by the death of Christ, as by a sacrifice. In one word, it was necessary that the apostle should convince them, *that in rejecting their old religion and accepting the new, they had received no injury—they had sustained no loss; but that, on the contrary, they had gained many immense advantages; that they had professed a religion, which scarcely deserved to be called new, since it was adorned with the same beauty, and bright with the same majesty as the former; and also promised rewards similar to those, which they expected from the Jewish dispensation, but far more glorious and sublime.*

These points were to be illustrated. And the most ingenious author of the Epistle does illustrate them, and fulfils his difficult office with prudence as well as zeal. The course he pursues is, first to prove that Christ is higher than the angels, ch. i. ii. and secondly, that he was superior to Moses, the high priests, &c. and performed sacerdotal offices of much greater efficacy and value than the old: and finally, he closes the Epistle with exhortations suited to the condition and circumstances of his readers.

The Apostle begins with demonstrating the superiority of the Christ to the angels.* The reason of this course was the fact, that the Jews boasted not a little of the immediate agency of angels in the promulgation of their law upon Sinai. And by the word angels I understand, not lightnings, nor any remarkable phenomena of nature; nor yet prophets, the divine messengers, and interpreters of the divine oracles; (though the word is sometimes used in both senses) but real intermediate beings between God and man. Since it can be abundantly proved by a variety

* It is not necessary to infer from this that the Author of the Epistle believed Christ to be higher than the angels in any thing besides the dignity of his character and office. A Jewish writer of that age would have no scruple in asserting *an acknowledged human being* to be higher or more excellent than angels. Schoettgen, an eminent rabbinical scholar, remarks in his note upon Matthew xxii. 30, 'The Jews ascribe greater glory to men than to angels, both in this life and the future.' He says again 'The Jews ascribe a far higher excellence to the blessed than to angels; because though frail men, they have overcome evil desires.' The following quotations support his assertion. Tanchuma in Talcut Simeoni fol. 271. 1. et Talcut Rubeni fol. 176. 2. 'Vide quod Deus S. B. Israelitas plus amet quam angelos ministeriales, Quomodo vero? Resp. Illi superiores dicuntur et Israelitae quoque sic dicuntur. q. d. Ps. 113. 20. Laudate dominum angeli ejus. Angeli dicuntur sancti Dan. iv. 17. 'Et in verbo sanctorum postulatum est;' Sic et Israelitae Lev. xix. 2. 'Sancti eritis.' Et quisnam magis amatur? Resp. Is quem deus praesentiasua honorat. q. d. Ps. 32. 1. 'Deus constitutus est in congregatione Dei.' In another place, 'Sapientia justorum temporibus Messiaé major erit quam angelorum ministerialium.' (Translator.)

of passages, that the Jews of that age held the opinion that angels were instrumental in the delivery of their law.*

To prove that Christ excelled Moses in dignity and honour was a matter of inferior necessity; since the Jewish converts complained not so much of the author of the Religion, as of the want of all those circumstances, which might give dignity and splendour to the external form of the religion. Yet as Moses was held in such veneration by the Jewish nation it was not useless just to glance at this topic; as in the very beginning of the Epistle he had pointed out the superiority of Jesus to the prophets, who stood nearly as high as Moses in their estimation.

The readers of this Epistle, who had just renounced the splendour of the Jewish ceremonies for a new and simple religion, must have been filled with painful emotions, when they saw that all that grandeur, which had formerly so powerfully affected their minds, had entirely vanished—the temple, the altar, the sacrifices, the priests, and the most eminent of all—the highpriest, whose dignity and authority amongst the Jews were almost indescribable.† What difficulties were to be surmounted by the Apostle in persuading his readers that none of these circumstances was wanting in the new religion? What important and beneficial consequences had he a right to expect from the successful performance of this task? What could be better adapted to give them consolation, and to arm them with fortitude to endure their calamities? Will any one then blame the author, and not rather consider it as a mark of his good sense, that he dwells long on this topic, and places it in a great variety of lights? Who will be surprised that he recurs so frequently to the ancient ordinances of the Jews, their rites, their ceremonies—that he not merely glances at them at the threshold, but penetrates with his readers into the inmost sanctuary, the most sacred recesses; that, by various metaphors, and a long continued series of connected allegories, he demonstrates the immense superiority of Christianity over their old religion in all those respects; since the latter presented only the shadow of the good things introduced by Christ; whilst from the former flowed real blessings, substantial rewards, as from a most copious fountain. How for-

* Luke seems to allude to this notion in Acts vii. 53. See Krebs from Josephus. Comp. Gal. iii. 19. and Wets. upon the passage. There is an explicit passage in Josephus Ant. 15. 5. 3. 'We having received the most excellent and holy doctrines from God by the instrumentality of angels.'

† He sometimes possessed power equal, or superior to, that of kings: like the Roman Pontifex. Philo (De legat. ad Caium p. 1031. C.) says, 'the Jews consider royalty inferior to the priesthood; and think the office of highpriest as much higher than that of king, as God is than man.' And De profug. p. 466 B. 'We say that the highpriest is not man but the divine Logos.' Comp. Joseph. against Apion b. ii. ch. 21.

cibly must these considerations have struck the minds of his readers? This is the most noble and the most difficult part of the Epistle; and most remarkable for copiousness of Jewish learning, subtilty of argument, and for a fanciful use of words. But the most striking feature of all is the constant and finished image, by which Christ is represented as a high priest, and his death as a sacrifice for our sins; a sublime figure, and, allowing for the peculiar opinions and circumstances of the persons addressed, a very suitable one. It is a subject of regret that this part of the Epistle has been so much confused by observations of supposed importance in polemic theology; or buried under a load of superfluous notes relative to the Hebrew ritual.

Such were the principal things to be illustrated by the author of this Epistle. But he is ever intent upon his main purpose of consoling and admonishing his readers, and exciting them to approve themselves to God the faithful, obedient, persevering professors of that religion, whose author was higher than the angels, and far superior to Moses and the prophets. He exhorts them to fear no afflictions—to suffer themselves to be driven from the strong hold of their faith by no assaults of calamity: since they were not to consider calamities as punishments from an angry judge, but the dealings of a most merciful father, cherishing towards us the most tender regard. For in this school of affliction their virtue might be confirmed, their minds strengthened, and their constancy increased. These and similar exhortations are profusely scattered in various parts of the Epistle. They are not merely collected together at the end, but glow like flowers on almost every page. It is, therefore, in my opinion, incorrect to divide this Epistle into two parts, one doctrinal, the other hortatory; which is the usual arrangement in the Epistles of St. Paul.

When one considers the immense and somewhat dangerous field the author was to traverse, and the manner in which he has done it, he cannot but admire the extreme ardour with which he hastens to the end proposed, and the caution and circumspection with which he selects his paths. It is of no consequence whether you ascribe this to the genius and spirit of the age, or to the skill and care of the writer. Every one, I think, must confess that he compared what Christianity teaches with the ancient Jewish ceremonies with great ingenuity; and made it plain that the new religion was inferior to the old in none of those advantages, in which the latter gloried.

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

'THE sources of all vice are our inferior propensities and appetites, which, though in themselves natural, innocent, and useful, cannot but, in our present state, interfere with reason, and remain to influence us, as well when they cannot be lawfully gratified, as when they can. Hence it comes to pass, that we often actually deviate, and that the reflecting principle is found in men, in all degrees of proportion to their lower powers and desires. Our only sound and healthy state is that, in which our reason is pre-eminent, and all our other powers obedient to it. *Goodness* in men is this state restored and established. It is the power of reflexion, raised to its due seat of direction and sovreignty in the mind; conscience fixed and kept in the throne, and having under its sway all our passions and desires. The least it implies is some predominancy of good affections and superiority of virtuous principles in us, above all others. Wickedness on the contrary is the subversion of this original and natural state of the mind, or the prevalency of the lower powers in opposition to the authority of reason. It implies the inferiority of good principles to others within a man; a greater attachment to some particular objects than to truth and righteousness, or such a defective regard to virtue as is consistent with indulging, *in any instance*, *known guilt*. It is the violent and unnatural state of the mind; the deposition of reason and the exaltation of appetite; the death of the man, and the triumph of the brute; slavery in opposition to liberty; sickness in opposition to health; and uproar and anarchy in opposition to peace.

'If then we would know our own characters, and determine to which class of men we belong, the good or the bad; we must compare our regard to everlasting truth and righteousness with our regard to friends, credit, pleasure and life; our love of God and moral excellence with our love of inferior and sensible objects, the dominion of reason with the force of appetite, and find which *prevail*. Till the rational part gets the victory over the animal part, and the main bent of the heart is turned towards virtue; till the principles of piety and goodness obtain in some degree the supremacy, and the passions have been made to resign their usurped power, we are within the confines of vice and danger and misery. There is too much reason to believe, that many many deceive themselves by concluding that since they possess worthy qualities, and feel the workings of good principles, since

they love virtue, and hate vice, and do perhaps much good, they can have little reason to distrust their character; not duly considering what is here insisted upon, or that what they ought chiefly to attend to, is the *place* or *degree* of these principles *in comparison* of others; and that it is not those who hate vice, but those, who hate it above pain, dishonor, or any thing whatever; nor those, who love virtue, but those, who love it above any thing that can come in competition with it, and possess a supreme regard to it, who are truly the virtuous and good. It is a common observation, that it is the *ruling passion* that denominates the character. The ruling love of power, fame, and distinction, denominates a man ambitious, the ruling love of pleasure, a man of pleasure. And in like manner, the ruling love of God, of our fellow-creatures, and of rectitude and truth, denominates a man virtuous.

Price on Morals.

[The following extract from the life of Bishop Porteus, exhibits in an interesting light the benevolence, which was a conspicuous trait in the character of that excellent prelate; and furnishes an affecting instance of the hardships and distresses of many of the poorer clergy of the English establishment.]

'Towards the conclusion of this year, 1778, the Bishop [then Bishop of Chester,] had an opportunity of very highly gratifying his own feelings, by being enabled to relieve the distress of a poor clergyman in his diocese, whose situation and circumstances were made known to him in the following letter.

'My Lord—Impelled by a gloomy fit of reflection (and many I have, God knows) on my condition, I prostrate myself at your feet, imploring, in the humblest manner, compassion and regard. If distress has eloquence, and may be permitted to plead, I have, alas! but too powerful an advocate in my favour.

I am, my Lord, the Curate of Wood-Plumpton, near Preston, *where I have served as such for about forty-two years successively*, and led withal an obscure contemplative life. I am now in the sixty-seventh year of my age, and have brought up six sons and six daughters to men's and women's estate, and am grand-father to twenty-seven children. *All my annual income is only something more than forty pounds.* I had a small tenement here, that came by my wife, but as I had contracted small debts, time after time, in so long a series of family occasions, have sold it to discharge those engagements; so that my bare salary is all that I

now enjoy for the support of my family, and *such is the indigence I am reduced to at present, that were it not for religious prospects, I should be wretched beyond the utmost energy of language to express.* Although poverty and old age together be but a mortifying fate, yet as to any personal misery, I hope I could defy it to touch me with impatience. But, oh! my Lord, the thing, that enervates all my fortitude, and cuts me to the heart, is, to see my poor family in want, and to be a spectator of their misery without the power of relief.

As you may have the direction of some charities, be pleased to use your influence in the case of

Your Lordship's faithful servant,
MATTHEW WORTHINGTON.'

'It will be easily imagined,' continues the biographer, 'that a letter, such as this, written with all the pathetic eloquence of undissembled distress, could not fail to make a strong impression on a feeling mind. The Bishop was exceedingly struck with it, and immediately opened a subscription, towards which he contributed largely himself, as a temporary relief; soon after which, a vicarage in his gift becoming vacant by resignation, he immediately presented it to Mr. Worthington. I have related this occurrence, not only because it is in itself an extremely interesting one, but as it makes a very prominent feature in the Bishop's character. I have never seen any one, who appeared to me to possess, in a more exalted degree, the true spirit of beneficence. It came warm from his heart, unchecked by cold calculation; whilst the good he did became doubly valuable by his manner of doing it.'

Hodgson's Life of Bishop Porteus.

'CHRISTIANITY has in every age produced effects on thousands and tens of thousands, whose lives are not recorded in ecclesiastical history; which, like other history, is for the most part a register of the follies, the vices, and the quarrels of those, who made a figure and noise in the world. Socrates, in the close of his work, observes, that if men were honest and peaceable, historians would be undone for want of materials.'

Jortin's Remarks.

'THE divine, who spends all his time in study and contemplation on objects ever so sublime and glorious, while his people remain uninstructed, acts the same part the eagle would do, that

should sit all day staring at the sun, while her young ones were starving in the nest.'

Dr. Horne's Essays and Thoughts.

DISPUTATION.

Two learned physicians and a plain honest countryman, happening to meet at an inn, sat down to dinner together. A dispute soon arose between the two doctors on the nature of aliment, which proceeded to such a height, and was carried on with so much fury, that it spoiled their meal, and they parted very much indisposed. The countryman, in the mean time, who understood not the cause, though he heard the quarrel, fell heartily to his meat, gave God thanks, digested it well, returned in the strength of it to his honest labour, and at evening received his wages. Is there not sometimes as much difference between the *polemical* and the *practical* Christian ?'

Horne's Thoughts

HONESTY.

'Honesty,' says Dr. Rees in his Dictionary, 'is a plant supposed to be possessed of eminent medical virtues; but it hath not the fortune to be received into the *shops*.' The doctor is giving a grave description, but his words, says Horne, admit of a humorous sense.

'Christianity, reduced to its principles, is more plain and simple than is commonly imagined, and is calculated for general utility.

When the first teachers of the Gospel, the apostles of Jesus, died, their authority, in a great measure, died with them, and devolved not upon their disciples;—but it still lives in their writings.

Christianity, though so much of it ever subsisted as to distinguish it advantageously from Paganism, Judaism, Mohammedanism, Deism, varied considerably, and adopted several disagreeing non-essentials, according to the times, and the people who entertained it.

A clear and unpolluted fountain, fed by secret channels with the dew of heaven, when it grows a large river, and takes a long and winding course, receives a tincture from the various soils through which it passes.

When Christianity became a bulky system, one may trace in it the genius of the loquacious and ever-wrangling Greeks; of the enthusiastic Africans, whose imagination was sublimed by the heat of the sun; of the superstitious Aegyptians, whose fertile soil and warm climate produced *monks* and *hermits*, swarming like animals sprung from the impregnated mud of the Nile; and of the ambitious and political Romans, who were resolved to rule over the world in one shape or other. To this we may add the Jewish zeal for trifles, arising from a contracted illiberal mind; the learned subtilty of the Gentile philosophers: and the pomp and ceremony of Paganism.

As soon as Christian societies began, debates began, and, as soon as Christianity was by law established, debates grew more violent. It is not in the wit or in the power of man, or rather, it is an impossibility, to prevent diversity of opinions, since this is the unavoidable result of human imperfection and human liberty, and is not to be removed, unless we had more light or less agency.

It is related of a grave Roman magistrate, that when he came to Greece as proconsul, he assembled together the philosophers at Athens, the head quarters of wit and logic, and told them that he was much concerned at their dissensions, and advised them to agree at last in their opinions, and offered them his authority and assistance to unite and reconcile them: upon which they all agreed in laughing at him for his pains. Cicero de Leg. 1. 20.

Councils after councils convened to settle the differences amongst Christians; and sometimes they met so frequently, that they might be called *quarter-sessions* as well as *councils*. But Gregory Nazianzen, a man of learning, a Christian, a bishop, and a father of the church, has told us, that, for his part, he chose to avoid all such assemblies, because he never saw any that had good success, and that did not rather increase than lessen dissensions and quarrels. Epist. 55, and in many other places, where he repeats the same complaints in verse and in prose.'

Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History.

LETTER OF MR. LOCKE, IN REPLY TO ONE OF SIR ISAAC NEWTON ASKING HIS FORGIVENESS FOR SOME INJUSTICE DONE TO HIS CHARACTER. First published in Stewart's Introduction to the Encyclopædia.

'SIR ISAAC in his letter, had said; "I beg your pardon for representing that you struck at the root of morality in a principle you laid down in your book of Ideas, and designed to pursue in

another book; and that I took you for a Hobbist." In the same letter Sir Isaac alludes to certain unfounded suspicions which he had been led to entertain of the propriety of Locke's conduct in some of their private concerns; adding with an ingenuous and almost infantine simplicity: "I was so much affected with this, that when one told me you was sickly and would not live, I answered, 'twere better if you were dead. I desire you to forgive me this uncharitableness." The letter is inscribed, *your most humble and most unfortunate servant, Is. Newton.*'

Mr. Locke to Mr. Newton.

'Sir—I have been ever since I first knew you so kindly and sincerely your friend, and thought you so much mine, that I could not have believed what you tell me of yourself, had I had it from any body else. And though I cannot but be mightily troubled that you should have had so many wrong and unjust thoughts of me, yet, next to the return of good offices, such as from a sincere good will I have ever done you, I receive your acknowledgment of the contrary as the kindest thing you could have done me, since it gives me hopes I have not lost a friend I so much valued. After what your letter expresses, I shall not need to say any thing to justify myself to you; I shall always think your own reflection on my carriage both to you and all mankind will sufficiently do that. Instead of that, give me leave to assure you, that I am more ready to forgive you than you can be to desire it; and I do it so freely and fully that I wish for nothing more than the opportunity to convince you that I truly love and esteem you; and that I have still the same good will for you as if nothing of this had happened. To confirm this to you more fully, I should be glad to meet you any where, and the rather, because the conclusion of your letter makes me apprehend it would not be wholly useless to you. I shall always be ready to serve you to my utmost, in any way you shall like, and shall only need your commands or permission to do it.

My book is going to press for a second edition; and, though I can answer for the design with which I writ it, yet, since you have so opportunely given me notice of what you have said of it, I should take it as a favour if you would point out to me the places that gave occasion to that censure, that, by explaining myself better, I may avoid being mistaken by others, or unwillingly doing the least prejudice to truth or virtue. I am sure you are so much a friend to both, that, were you none to me, I could expect this from you. But I cannot doubt but you would do a great deal more than this for my sake, who, after all, have all the concern of a friend for you, wish you extremely well, and am, without compliment,' &c. &c.

REVIEW.

ARTICLE XIV.

The Criminality of Intemperance: An address delivered at the eleventh anniversary of the Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance. By Henry Ware, Jr. Minister of the Second Church in Boston. Boston: Phelps & Farnham. 1823. 12mo.

We strongly recommend this address to public attention. We shall be doing a service to the community, if we can promote its circulation. We have seen nothing better adapted to awaken attention to the flood of vice and misery which intemperance is spreading. It is a forcible exhibition of the nature and extent of this loathsome form of moral depravity. It is forcible, because it is true, because it contains no assertions which can be gainsayed, and because it expresses, justly and strongly, those sentiments which a Christian or a moral man or an enlightened patriot must feel in regarding the evil which it presents to view. We shall make large extracts; for we cannot fill our pages with any thing more important. We trust, at the same time, that these extracts will not supersede in any degree the circulation of the address itself; but only tend to promote it. It is a tract of which large editions should be printed in all our cities, and which should be spread as widely as possible over the country.

The first head is of the Criminality of Intemperance.

'Considered as *a habit of gross self-indulgence*, it is criminal. We need not go to an ascetic extreme, and declare the way of virtue to be a path of mere self-denial and mortification. But it is plain, on the other hand, that life was not intended to be, and ought not to be, a season of mere self-indulgence; that any habit of it is incompatible with the real object of life; that, of whatever nature the indulgence may be, it interferes with the pursuit of eminent virtue; and that all grossness in it is criminal. We find no sect of philosophers and moralists in the world, who have not taught the incompatibility of self-indulgence with a high virtue. Even the genuine Epicureans are no exception. It cannot, therefore, be necessary to argue with the disciples of the pure morality, which was taught from heaven, on the criminality of this most gross and most beastly of all forms of selfishness. What a reproach to Christians, that it so prevails among them, and they are so insensible to its guilt!

'Again: *Unfaithfulness to the social relations of life* is criminal. We are made to live with one another and help one another. The

Creator has interwoven the interest and happiness of every man with the interest and happiness of some others. He has parents, or consort, or children, or friends, for whose peace and happiness he is bound to consult, no less than for his own. To disregard them, is to disobey God. If then, by the habitual gratification of a selfish propensity, he wound their feelings, disturb their peace of mind, contribute to distress rather than comfort them, to be a burden instead of a satisfaction, and to bring upon them want and suffering, is he not a criminal? If, for the sake of this one personal indulgence, he persist in making wretched those who are dear to him, is he not a criminal? It is no excuse that he is thoughtless; it is a crime to be thoughtless concerning such duties. It is no excuse that he is really kind-hearted and affectionate; it is so much the worse that such dispositions should be allowed to bear the fruits of malice and ill-will.

'Further: *To incapacitate one's self for duty* is criminal. The great Creator has bestowed upon his creatures powers suited to the part he requires them to act; he places them in situations adapted to their exercise; and requires of them a service proportioned to those powers. Let them be employed with the most faithful diligence in their best and brightest state, and man can do no more than is reasonably his duty, can make no more than an adequate return to that goodness which has blest him; if he have felt truly grateful, and perceived the extent of his obligations, he will readily acknowledge the most faithful return to be poor and insufficient. But if, instead of this fidelity, he set himself to dull his faculties, to weaken his powers, to blind himself to the perception of right and wrong, and frustrate the object of his creation—striving to rid himself of his accountableness by descending to the level of the insane brutes;—what name will common sense give to this short of a crime!

'Yet this is precisely the description of the drunkard. He has done the utmost in his power to incapacitate himself for that for which he was made. He has endeavoured to blot out his rational nature. He has done his best to cast away his crown of glory and honour, and forfeit his place—a little lower than the angels—and become as one of the irrational beings, over whom God gave him dominion.

'This he has done deliberately, step by step, seeing his path as he advanced, his eyes open on the consequences, after warning, and with forethought, in spite of entreaty, remonstrance and tears, in contempt of his own resolutions to the contrary, and a thousand broken vows. His path is in a manner strewed with broken pledges, violated promises, forfeited oaths, over which he forces his march to idiocy, brutishness, infamy, death.'

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'I do not mean to say that this habit is ever formed without temptation, or persisted in without what may be thought an excuse

The temptation is gradual and insinuating; the habit is formed insensibly. It is an established custom for men to drink while they labour. The poor man is absurdly taught to think a glass necessary for his strength; he finds another necessary for companionship. He cannot walk abroad without finding a lure invitingly held out beneath the license of the law. Before he is aware of it, a certain stimulus has become necessary to his constitution. If he try to amend, he is pressed by this necessity, and in a manner compelled to maintain the vice; though he would give the world to renounce it. And where, we are asked, is the sin in all this? Is there not rather a call for compassion than for censure?

Undoubtedly there is a call for compassion—for deep and earnest compassion. So there is in the case of every sin, when we reflect on the circumstances of trial and temptation. The case of the drunkard is not, in this respect, different from that of other criminals. The man who, impelled by want, or the unprincipled habits of a bad education, robs on the high-way, is driven by as imperious a necessity as the drunkard. The temptation is as strong, the habit is as irresistible. The sudden passion of the murderer is as irresistible as the appetite of the tippler. The cherished revenge of the assassin is as strong an excitement as the cherished thirst of the intemperate. But who, in these cases, excuses the crime because of the temptation? Who thinks it a palliation of the offence, that the state of the offender's mind and heart is such as necessarily to lead to it? Who excuses the two-fold crime of David, because of the greatness of the lust by which he was drawn away and enticed? Compassionate therefore, as you please, the condition of the miserable man who is the slave of intemperate habits; but remember that, after all, his apology is but the same with that of other criminals, and quite as strong for them as for him.

'Indeed, may we not fairly go further, and say, that there are some circumstances which bring a peculiar aggravation to his guilt? When we consider the powerful dissuasives from this sin, is there not an aggravation in that state of mind which is not at all affected by them? When we reflect on the misery it occasions, must there not be a singular guilt in that deadness of mind, which allows one coolly to produce that misery without any malice or bad intention? How thoroughly must the good affections be palsied, and the moral sense destroyed, when this brutalizing enjoyment has become more desirable to a man, than all the rich pleasures which flow from home, friendship, health, and reputation! What an enormity of sin must he have to answer for, who has depraved himself so far, that, when all the felicities of a rational and social being are put in the one scale, and those of a beastly self-indulgence in the other, he chooses the last, strips himself of decency and honour, puts out the light of reason, flings off the attributes of a man, and rushes into all the wickedness of voluntary insanity, disgusting idiocy, and profane beastliness,—disgraces his friends, beggars his family, initi-

ates his children in the dispositions and pathway of hell, becomes the corrupter of youthful purity, and a public teacher of debauchery —with no disposition to engage in good pursuits, and no power to attend to the things which concern his peace, or to take one step toward the salvation of his soul! What can be said of such a man, but that his present and eternal ruin are complete? Earth curses him, while he is upon it, and beyond it he can see no prospect but that of the blackness of darkness. *A drunkard cannot inherit the kingdom of God.*'

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'Now if there were but *one* being upon earth, who had thus deprived himself of his rational nature, and darkened his hope of immortality, with what intense and fearful interest would he be contemplated! with what earnest sympathy should we crowd around to gaze on so deplorable a spectacle, and how many hands would be united to save him from destruction! Yet it is not one, but many. Multitudes are thronging the broad path, and pressing forward with obstinate infatuation to this hideous gulf. Every village has its list of those who were impoverished and ruined by this vice. Every town can tell of estates forfeited to pay for their owner's degradation, and exhibits on its records the names of young and promising men, cut off prematurely by this infamous sin. Our alms-houses, reared for the refuge of honest misfortune, have become the shelter of poverty and sin, where the drunkard and glutton who have come to poverty, are supported upon the hard earnings of the industrious and sober. Look at a few facts.* Nearly four-fifths of those supported as paupers by a tax upon the industry of the community, have become paupers through intemperance. In one town in this state, thirteen out of every fourteen are a public charge from this cause. In this city the proportion is about two in every three. If, therefore, we consider that the annual expense of our alms house is more than thirty-thousand dollars, we find that twenty thousand dollars are expended for the support of this vice. Twenty thousand dollars annually appropriated by the town of Boston in charity to drunkards! It is said that the annual expenses of the alms-houses in this state amount to about 900,000 dollars; four fifths of which sum—720,000 dollars—are paid for the benefit of those who were ruined by intemperance. What tax is there so enormous as this!

In estimating, however, the extent of this evil, we must add to the preceding account, the sum expended for ardent spirits by those who are not yet objects of the public charity. On the presumption that the inhabitants of this city consume their proportion of the thirty-three millions annually expended in the United States,† we shall find the annual expenditure in Boston to be one hundred and

* Most of these statements are made from the past reports of this Society; for some of them I am indebted to other sources, but am unable to specify them.

† This estimate is founded on the state of things in 1810; it must be much short of the truth at the present time.

eighty thousand dollars*—more than sufficient to pay all the taxes. That this calculation is far within bounds will be evident, if we consider that it supposes each retailer to sell less than the amount of two dollars a week. In the city of New-York, in 1820, the amount expended in ardent spirits was one million eight hundred and ninety three thousand and eleven dollars; which in proportion to the population is more than double the sum just named for Boston. So that, to speak far within bounds, there is every year consumed in this town spirits to the amount of two hundred thousand dollars. What one benefit to society can be named as the result of this monstrous cost? There is no reason to suppose that the town consumes more in proportion to its population than the country; on which supposition we have more than two millions five hundred thousand wasted annually in Massachusetts on this indulgence. Add to this the seven hundred and twenty thousand dollars, charity money, which the public pays from this cause, and there is a waste of more than three millions. I ask again, who will show us the benefits of this expense? How is government strengthened, or education promoted, or good morals aided, or good neighbourhood encouraged?

'These various considerations afford some faint idea of the extent of this plague. To apprehend it yet more distinctly, we must remember the waste of life it occasions. It is the cause of more deaths, either directly or by the disorders it creates, than any other single disease. It is said there are every year six thousand persons who die in the very act of intoxication, within the United States.† If we could take almost any one of these cases separately, and describe to ourselves all its loathsome minuteness of depravity and misery, as Sterne has painted his single prisoner in the dungeon, what a heart-rending and soul-sickening picture would be presented! But when we consider that this scene is repeated six thousand times every year, attended in most cases with indescribable distress and shame to family and friends; and that more than six times six thousand are pressing on in the straight path to the same end; the mind wants power to imagine so great a mass of accumulated and disgusting wretchedness. It turns away with loathing and abhorrence; or, I might say, with incredulity; for the mind is but too little affected by an evil, which has grown too large for its measurement or conception. It has accordingly happened amongst us, as it happens in a city where a pestilence is raging. While the deaths are few and rare, there is a prevailing alarm and sadness. But as the destroyer advances and deaths multiply, there is produced a dreadful stupidity; so that as horrors accumulate, indulgence and disorders increase also, till you cannot say whether the wide ruin of death be more terrible than the riotous unconcern of the living.

* $160,000 per annum=$3,269 per week.

† In a work lately published at Paris by M. Passenas, entitled *Russia and Slavery*, it is said, "It is computed that upwards of 200,000 die annually from the effects of intoxicating liquors."

So it is amongst us. The moral pestilence, which scatters suffering worse than death, spreads itself every where around us, but we are unaffected by its terrific magnitude and fearful devastation. It would be comparatively a little thing that the plague should sweep these thousands from our cities; it would be a comfort, that they perished by the hand of God. But now, they fall by their own hand, and rush downward, of their own will, to the corrupting grave. And we stand by, unmoved! We hear with amazement and horror of those on a distant continent, who, in the infatuation of religious superstition, cast themselves on the burning piles of their husbands, or fling their bodies before the rolling car of a monster idol. But this sadder infatuation of the multitude at home, who are sacrificing themselves beneath the operation of slow and brutish poison, hardly moves us to a momentary commiseration. We might succeed in preaching up a crusade to India, while we can hardly gain a hearing for those who are perishing by our side.'

These passages will enable every one to form a judgment of the tone of deep and true feeling, the eloquence of strong conviction and moral sentiment, which characterises this address. We will give but one extract more, which may serve to introduce a few remarks of our own. Of the measures to be adopted to lessen the amount of intemperance, the author says—

'I have left myself no room to speak. Two things only appear certain. First, that a principal object must be, to draw the public attention frequently and earnestly to the subject. It must be presented to the public mind and kept before it, till its importance is seen and felt by every member of the community. This has been and continues to be the main design of our Society. In this, it asks, and has a right to demand, the countenance and co-operation of patriots, philanthropists, Christians—especially of Christian ministers and instructers of youth—of every man, who, by his pen or his voice, exercises any controul over public opinion, and can help in giving a tone to the moral sentiment of the community. Very little can be hoped, until the apathy which has prevailed, and which has palsied every exertion of this Society, be removed. In the second place, it seems at the same time equally clear, that there is no man nor body of men, who can strike at the root of the evil, but the Legislature of the nation. Exhortation, tracts, preaching, and personal influence will effect but a partial and imperceptible remedy, while it remains so easy and cheap a matter to indulge this pernicious habit. It is the facility of obtaining spirits, it is the suffering the temptation to lie in the path, and at the door, and to be brought to the very lips of every man, wherever he goes and whatever he does, which is the real occasion of the extensive ruin.'

We fully coincide in the opinions here expressed. The first thing to be done is to produce a strong impression upon the pub-

lic, by reiterated efforts, and by presenting the evil under all its various aspects, many and hideous as they are. Its guilt, its destruction of the soul, its bringing on certain misery here, and deeper and more awful misery hereafter, should be urged with the conviction of men, who know that, if religion and morality be not a lie, that, if there be a God and a future state, what they urge is true. But it should, at the same time, be remembered, that the case of the drunkard himself is almost as hopeless as it is deplorable, at least as regards the application of all moral remedies. 'Many a drunkard,' says a late writer on the subject 'have I had occasion to observe; and among all the number who have fallen under my notice, I do not remember to have seen one in whom the habit was cured.' The habit destroys those faculties and sensibilities to which moral appeals must be made; and stupifies the apprehension of future evil. It produces at the same time a state of physical disease, which renders the temptation to renew the act of drunkenness almost irresistible. It is therefore not against the vice itself as actually existing, that motives should be arrayed and exhortations and warnings directed; for you would be speaking in the ear of the dead. As regards those who have become its victims, their time of probation, to human apprehension, is past; or at least, it is by physical treatment only, that they can be recovered to life. It is against those courses and indulgences which may lead to this deadening sin, that our efforts should be directed. It is to those who are in danger, and not to those who are publicly regarded as actually guilty, that we may hope to exhibit with effect a picture of its misery, degradation and ruin. You are indulging yourself a little, it may be said; you are becoming accustomed to the temporary exhilaration, which a slight degree of intoxication produces; you are very ready to take your share, whenever the dangerous and immoral practice of the times permits or requires the offer of spirituous liquors; but you are still within the limits of hope; you still have sufficient power to save yourself remaining; you may become a respected and happy husband and parent, and see your family thriving around you; you have not yet passed the barrier over which no voluntary return is to be hoped for; you have not yet determined to throw aside all the blessings which God offers you here or hereafter; but go on as you have begun; and in a few years, humanity will regard you as an object of unspeakable compassion; but it will be an ill-judging and false humanity, which, in its compassion, shall forget your degradation and your guilt.

The next topic that may be insisted upon, is the ruin which this vice spreads around it, the heart sinking wretchedness, which

it commonly inflicts upon the family of its victim, wretchedness, perhaps more deep and poignant, than any which the sinner himself is doomed to suffer in this life. In separating himself from his species, by yielding to a thoroughly selfish indulgence, without regard to the hopes or claims of any other being, he is commonly tearing asunder with protracted and unceasing torture, the strongest ties and affections of our nature,—ties and affections, to which by every repeated dose of the moral poison that he swallows, he is rendering himself more insensible. We have become accustomed to witness intemperance and intoxication in the lower classes, and have learnt to regard them, perhaps, much as a native of one of the West Indian islands may regard the sufferings of the slaves around him. The worldly and sensual will of course be indifferent to whatever misery exists, if it do not penetrate within the sphere of their own selfish pleasures. But let the Christian, who, during this inclement season, is sitting by his fireside, surrounded by domestic enjoyments, think of the suffering of that poor man's wife, who knows that her husband is at the dram-shop, wasting the means, and unfitting himself for the industry, which should provide food for her children, which should patch up the rents of the house, and purchase the decent clothing necessary to keep them from shivering and sickening in the winter's cold. Let him imagine her after the exhausting and cheerless labours of the day, harassed by her little ones, who are paining her with their complaints, while she is waiting for the return of her husband, to receive some brutal insult, or be the object of some loathsome merriment. Let him conceive of all this, not as taking place one day only; but as repeated day after day, and night after night, till heart and strength and life are worn out. It needs but little imagination to conceive of such scenes, which are taking place in our neighbourhood, and, perhaps, within a few minutes walk from where we are sitting; and his sensibility must be dull indeed, who thinks that the description has been overcharged; or that details more painful might not easily be added.

What has been brought to view is but one form of the sufferings occasioned by drunkenness. It would be easy to present a variety of pictures, justified by every day's experience, of the grinding misery which it inflicts. They should be exhibited in different forms and different modes of address, that the community may be awakened to the amount of evil which exists, and that a deep impression, if possible, may be made upon those who are entering the downhill path to ruin, and converting themselves into tormentors of their nearest connexions. They should be conveyed to the lower classes in a manner adapted to affect

their minds; and one of the best modes of doing this would be by short narratives,* in which there need be but little of fiction except the names.

There is another consideration, which should be strongly urged upon the attention of the public; and that is the burdensome tax, the waste of property, which goes to the support of beggary, occasioned by intemperance. It is necessary, without doubt, in the present state of things, that this tax should be imposed; for neither duty nor humanity will allow us to suffer the drunkard to want that food and shelter which he has rendered himself incapable of procuring by his own labour. But our poor laws, as at present administered, without some further legal provisions, operate directly as a premium and encouragement to drunkenness. Their language in effect is this; only waste your property and incapacitate yourself by your vices for honest labour; and the public will take care to provide you with a comfortable support. In this country, where the necessaries and even comforts of life are so easily procured by common industry, it is vice, and especially the vice of intemperance, which throws upon the public the great majority of those whom it is obliged to maintain. 'Of the causes of pauperism, intemperance in the use of spirituous liquors is the most powerful and universal.' This is the official language of the committee, appointed by the Legislature of Massachusetts to investigate the subject. 'Intemperance,' say the managers of the Society for preventing pauperism in New-York—'Intemperance in the use of ardent spirits remains, and the managers fear will long remain an awful source of pauperism, crime, and wretchedness, unless the public authority confer more attention upon these deplorable evils, and correct with a bold and vigorous policy our present system of regulations.' From one of their reports it appears, that there were in the year 1820, 1680 retailers of spirituous liquors in New-York, making an average of one tippling house for every fourteen houses, and that more than 1,890,000 dollars were expended for ardent spirits in that metropolis. The money thus spent would have been sufficient to furnish the whole city with bread. The number of paupers in the city was, at the same time, calculated to be not much less than 10,000. So it is, that our poor houses are crowded both in town and country. We must take something from the little comforts which an honest poor man might afford his children, in order to give his hard earnings to his worthless neighbour, who could but would not dig, and is not ashamed to

* One such we have seen, of much more than common merit, the story of Mary Hollis, published at New-York.

beg; or, rather, who comes insolent and grumbling to claim his support from the public as a right. We are in general quite careful enough to see how public money is appropriated, we are rather sparing than otherwise, when called to bestow it for the support of religion and learning, and can think the difference between 600 or 700 dollars in a clergyman's salary quite important; but we are ready without much hesitation, to pay the larger sum for the encouragement of intemperance, and the promotion of crimes, misery, and want. We do not think it worth while to inquire, whether some legislative provision might not be made to lessen the amount of the burden; and it seems to be apprehended, that the mere proposal of such a thing would be an unpopular act. There are those who think the community would be thrown into alarm, at the thought of essentially lessening the amount of drunkards, and paupers, and poor rates, of domestic misery and crimes against society, if, at the same time, the price of domestic gin and West India rum were to be raised.

When public opinion is well informed, and public sentiment strongly affected, as it may be, upon this subject, we may look for effectual relief from the interposition of the legislature; and there is no subject so important to which their attention can be directed. 'In my opinion,' says a gentleman of great ability and intelligence, Mr. Colden, writing as mayor of New York, 'a due regulation of dram shops would do more to lessen idleness, prevent poverty, and to suppress vice, than all the penal statutes which could be passed.' During the administration of the same gentleman, as mayor, the number of licenses for the sale of ardent spirits was very considerably lessened; and the good effects of this measure were at once perceived. 'Crimes,' he says, 'have numerically decreased, and comparatively, they have very greatly diminished. I am fully persuaded that this great benefit to the community is chiefly to be imputed to the suppression of so many of those poison-shops, where a man might buy rum enough to make himself beastly drunk for six cents.'

On the specific character of the provisions to be adopted by the legislature, we shall, at present, make but few remarks. It is clear what their end should be, to lessen essentially the temptations and facilities to drunkenness.

We conceive that this might be done,

1. By increasing to a very considerable amount the price of a retailer's license; so as to put it out of the power of every one who is too lazy to labour, to set up a shop for the sale of ardent spirits, and thus to get money by spreading vice and misery through the community. The effect would, at the same time, be to put the sale of spirits into the hands of those, who

having some standing and character in society, would feel more restraint against encouraging intoxication from a sense of decency, and a regard to public opinion, if not from higher motives. The number of licensed shops would thus be lessened; and their character be rendered less mischievous.

2. By new provisions and restrictions in the granting of licences. The licences should, as at present, be renewed yearly, and in order to the obtaining of a license, it might be made necessary for each person applying, *severally* to procure from the selectmen of the town, in which he resides, a certificate, that to the best of their knowledge and belief, he has not heretofore been guilty of any breach or evasion of the laws of the state regarding the sale of spirituous liquors.

3. By proportioning the number of licensed retailers' shops to the population of each town; so that they shall never exceed a certain number in a certain population.

4. By making it the duty of the selectmen of a town upon application from a near connexion of any individual, or from any three persons in writing, representing such individual as in habits of intemperance, or as having been guilty of intoxication, to inquire into the case, and if they find such representation well founded, to send *private* notice to all retailers of ardent spirits in the town, forbidding all such retailers to sell ardent spirits to the person specified; and by making it penal to disobey such prohibition.

5. By making it the duty of selectmen to receive and attend to all complaints for breaches of the laws by the illegal sale of spirituous liquor, and to prosecute for such offences.

6. By increasing the pecuniary penalty for such offences; and by providing that the whole fine shall be applied to the support of the poor of the town, in which the offence is committed.

7. By providing by law for a marked distinction between the maintenance afforded by the public to the virtuous and unfortunate poor, who may need its support; and those who have reduced themselves to indigence by habits of vice, and especially intemperance.

For the latter class we conceive, that, so far as regards their physical wants, nothing but mere necessaries should be provided; that they should be compelled, as far as they are capable of it, to hard labour; and that they should in no case be discharged from the alms-house or work-house, till they have defrayed by their labour all the charges incurred for their support. The distinction between the two classes of the poor might be left in the first instance to the discretion of the selectmen, or of the overseers of the poor; an appeal from their decision lying to the

whole town, of which such poor are members, assembled in town-meeting.

We are far from, being solicitous to maintain, that these are the most effectual; and, still less, that they are the only effectual measures which may be adopted. But it is in the highest degree desirable to direct men's minds to the consideration of some specific provisions respecting the evil which we wish to diminish; and the discussion of those now proposed, if it do not lead to their adoption, may lead to the adoption of better. We have, for the sake of brevity, conformed our language to the general mode of town government among us without particular reference to that of the city of Boston; to which it will be easy to accommodate the provisions suggested. We have spoken only of what may be done by the legislature of our own state, not of what might be effected by the general government; because we believe that it is in the state legislatures, that the process of reform and improvement is most likely to commence.

We trust that no one impressed with the magnitude of the evil of which we have been speaking will despond of producing a better state of things. This is practicable, we believe, and may be hoped for. We cannot distrust human nature so much, as to think that we may not entertain the strongest hopes, when engaged in a contest with naked vice. In the present case, there are on the one side, the laws of God, the awful sanctions of religion, every principle of duty, every humane feeling, the public interest, the happiness of individuals; and nothing can be arrayed in opposition to them but the vilest selfishness and the most degraded appetites.

We now dismiss the subject for the present. There are other views concerning it which we hope to have a future opportunity of presenting; and the most important considerations relating to it must be repeatedly and continually urged upon public attention, in every different form; till all, but those who are morally deaf and dead, hear and understand and feel.

ARTICLE XV.

Letter addressed to Pope Pius VII. Sovereign Pontiff, by the Count Metaxa, Deputy of the Provincial Government of Greece. Brussels. 1823.

On the opening of the Congress of Verona, the eyes of all who were interested in the Grecian struggle, were turned to that assembly; in the expectation that the affairs of Greece would be among the prominent objects that engaged the attention of the sovereigns and their ministers. Several circumstances authorized this expectation. The assumed vocation of the emperors and kings who composed it, as the guardians of the peace of Europe, led to the opinion that they would interest themselves in the fortunes of an uncommonly bloody war, raging so near the territories of the three most powerful European states. The peculiar duties, which seemed implied in the name of 'Holy Alliance,' gave strength to this opinion. This singular compact between the continental sovereigns of Europe has to this day no object avowed by themselves but that of 'guarantying the administration of their several states, on the principles of the Christian Religion.' It was very natural to think that a Congress, composed with the exception of one power of the members of such a covenant, and holding unresisted in its hands the fate of Europe, would at least evince a disposition to interfere in a contest now confessedly* waged, with a view to the extermination of five millions of Christians. This opinion was still farther confirmed by recollecting that the Emperor Alexander, the head of the Holy Alliance, is of the Greek communion; that he acknowledges the patriarch of Constantinople as his spiritual chief, and that one of the first acts of the present war in Turkey was the hanging of that patriarch on Easter day, with circumstances of uncommon indignity. It was borne in mind, that the Russian emperors and empresses had before gone to war upon the Turks *professedly* to protect the Christians in Moldavia and Wallachia in the liberty of worshipping, according to the rites of their church; and that even at the beginning of the present revolution a powerful Russian army had been collected in Bessarabia, to enforce the observation of the treaties of Bucharest and Kairnadji, by which this liberty was secured to those prov-

* It will not be thought too much to call this war confessedly one of extermination, when we consider the following sentence, in the *Iafta*, or inscription, attached to the breast of the Patriarch, according to the oriental fashion, in which it was said that the Patriarch 'had neither prevented nor punished the revolt in the Morea, but, on the contrary, had in all probability, taken part in it, as its chief, so that it is almost impossible *that the whole Greek nation*, although it may contain innocent individuals, *should not be totally destroyed and exposed to the wrath of God*.'

inces. All these circumstances certainly authorized the opinion that something important would be decided at Verona, in reference to the Grecian struggle. Among the ministers assembled there, was Lord Strangford, the English ambassador at Constantinople, who left the Turkish capital to repair to Verona. The friends of humanity recollected the following stanza, among his lordship's beautiful translations from Camoens:—

> There surely is some guardian power,
> Which rightly suffers wrong,
> Gives vice to bloom its little hour,
> And virtue late and long:

they hoped the noble poet in his capacity of ambassador would contend for the truth, which he had proclaimed as a bard, and would feel that four centuries were quite enough for the 'little hour' of Turkish barbarity, and that it was 'late' enough for the cause of Christianity to begin its triumph. In the hope that the allies would resolve on something in their favour, the Grecian government deputed the Count Metaxa, a native of the Ionian isles who has passed into the service of the patriots, as their representative at Verona. The Count landed at Ancona, a city on the Adriatic, belonging to the Ecclesiastical state. While detained here in quarantine, (a fate, to which all coming from Turkey must submit, and which has in some cases peculiarly increased the distresses of the fugitives from the Turkish scimitar) fearing that he should not arrive in season at Verona, and anticipating a refusal to his request to be received there, the Count addressed a letter to Pope Pius VII, as the sovereign of the city in which he had landed from Greece, and enclosed the memorial of the Grecian government to the christian powers, beseeching his Holiness to forward it to Verona. It is this letter, which we have named at the head of our article.

The result of the Congress at Verona is well known; although a few only of its deliberations have been published. The Congress refused to give any countenance to the patriots, beyond respecting their blockade, and a kind of circular addressed to the Greeks counselling them to submit to their Turkish masters, was translated into Romaic and scattered profusely in all quarters, where the patriots were in arms. The world has been favoured, in a tolerably authentic form, with the views of the Emperor Alexander on this subject. We allude to the speech of M. de Chateaubriand, pronounced in the Chamber of Deputies, on the 25th of February last, in which the following passage is worthy of note, being a part of M. de Chateaubriand's report of what was said to him by the Emperor Alexander at Verona. As the French minister informs us that he took down the Emperor's words in writing at the time, there can be little doubt of their accuracy.

'There can no longer be such a thing,' says the Russian Emperor, 'as an English, French, Russian, Prussian, or Austrian policy; there is henceforth but one policy, which, for the safety of all, should be adopted both by people and kings. It was for me the first to show myself convinced of the principles, on which I founded the alliance. An occasion offered itself, the rising in Greece. Nothing certainly seemed more for my interests, for the interests of my people, no thing more acceptable to my country than a religious war with Turkey, *but I have thought I perceived in the troubles of the Morea, the sign of revolution;* and I have held back. * * *. Providence has not put under my command 800,000 soldiers to satisfy my ambition, but to protect religion, morality, and justice, and to secure the prevalence of those *principles of order* on which human society rests.'

Such was the doctrine, which gave the tone on Grecian affairs to the deliberations at Verona. It is superfluous to observe that liberty to appear at Verona was refused to the Count Metaxa.

We have entered into this detail, which we trust our readers will not think too secular for our work, because we esteem the present struggle in Greece of the last moment in its connection with the cause of Christian truth; because the doings of a body of kings and emperors styling itself the 'holy alliance,' deserve the attention of those interested in the progress of public opinion in matters of religion, and because we think there is an inconsistency in the professions of this alliance and their conduct on this occasion, which ought to be exposed, with all the respect due to the high station of the parties; but with all the plainness due to truth and Christianity.

The possessions of the Turks on the continent of Europe are computed by the best geographers to contain from nine to ten millions of inhabitants, of whom five millions are Christians of the Greek church. The different islands of the Archipelago contain a Christian population of about 500,000, or did contain it, before the catastrophe of Scio turned the most populous of those isles into a desert. The Turkish dominions on the continent of Asia contain about two millions of Greek christians, large bodies of whom are daily driven by the outrages of the Turkish soldiery to emigrate to those parts of Greece, which are in the power of the patriots. The number of Greeks in Russia, Austria, the Ionian islands, and Italy is considerable; and of these as a great portion have been driven from Greece, by the insecurity of property in that country, so it is probable that the greater part of them would return thither, were a free government of laws established. But admitting, for the sake of argument, that any free state, which could, by possibility, be erected in Greece, as it might comprehend a portion only of the European continental provinces, a part of the islands only, and

no portion perhaps of the Asiatic domains of Turkey, would be likely to embrace only one half of the Grecian christians in the world. This would still give an amount of nearly *four millions*; a third more than the American population, when our independence was declared. Moreover as nineteen twentieths of the soil of Greece are claimed and occupied by Turkish lords, their expulsion would throw open a very wide domain, calculated to produce the same effect on the progress of population in Greece, as the like cause does on the progress of population in America. The Grecian struggle, then, is a struggle to erect a free Christian state of four millions of Christians, under circumstances likely to favour their very rapid increase. Such a struggle we maintain to be most momentous in its connexion with the diffusion of civilization and of Christianity. In the common wars of Europe, neither Christianity nor civilization is at stake, to any considerable degree. Though all great national measures bear ultimately upon them, it does not often happen that humanity or religion is very deeply concerned to turn the scale one way rather than the other. But in this struggle, if the Greeks prevail, a free Christian government is established in the part of Europe most favorable to national growth and prosperity. In saying this we have advanced a proposition, which words at length may illustrate, but to which nothing can add importance. Is is all important. The experience of the world has shown that, at the present day, civilization cannot exist without Christianity. Greece herself certainly proves this and more than this; it proves that Christianity cannot exercise its natural effect on man unless it enjoy at least a toleration. This has never been enjoyed by the Christians in Turkey; for any Turk suspected of adopting Christianity forfeited his life. The government of the country has been anti-christian, and what has been the effect? General barbarity; the absence of many of the improvements of life, no roads, no letter-post, no printing-offices, no secure investment of property, no public buildings, no prosperity in any great national interest. In short we all know what sort of a state Turkey is, and it requires but a slight effort of the imagination to conceive what it might be, under a free Christian government.

Considering the destiny of nations as too complicated and vast an interest for private benevolence to engage in, we are not ready enough to consider the amount of good or evil to be done or avoided, on a national scale. Did any of our missionaries write us home that by the divine blessing on their efforts, they had converted a whole village, in a Mahometan or Hindoo state; that it was a thriving and prosperous village, we should think it was

glorious tidings. Were we informed of a certain village, where a Christian population was miserably oppressed, by a handful of insolent pagan or Mahometan lords, who heaped them with oppression and their religion with indignity, but that there was good hope that the powerful intercession of some respectable Christian government might procure to the victims the privilege of dwelling alone, in the quiet enjoyment of their faith, and in the pursuit of its attendant blessings, every nerve in christendom would be strained in the cause. But here we have not a village, but a nation, a whole country, once a flourishing one and now involved in a war of extermination, with a barbarous Mahometan power. Where, we ask, in any but the primitive annals of missionary or Christian effort has such an interest been at stake? We may here quote the words of Count Metaxa in his letter to the late Pope named at the head of our article.

'For four centuries the Greek nation has been exposed to the most cruel sufferings. All that is most barbarous and inhuman has been devised against the Greeks. The name of *Raya*, by which the Greek subjects of the Porte are officially designated, signifies *a person against whom the sentence of death has been pronounced.* In this fact alone the character of the Mahometan despotism may be recognized. At every hour of the day the Greek christian is reminded of his slavery.'

The *Caratch*, or capitation paid by the Greeks is avowedly the ransom of their forfeited lives.

The spectacle presented by the Turkish empire to the eye of the European, and the history of the political relations of the European states with the Ottoman Porte, are truly astonishing. It so happens, that the states of western Europe, which on all sides form the frontier or approach the nearest by sea to Turkey, present the *least* favorable specimen of European civilization, and yet how great is the contrast between them and the provinces of Turkey. Russia on the north, Austria on the west and south, and Italy on the south west, certainly are not the countries, where the state of society in Europe is on its best footing, and yet what a frightful contrast strikes the traveller in crossing even their frontiers and entering Turkey. On the one side of the line, he witnesses a government despotic, perhaps, in one country, weak in another, but in all exercising substantially an equal justice toward all the subjects, and united to them by the ties of language, descent, and religion. On the other side of this line, he sees a horde of Tartarian savages, encamped in the towns and traversing the villages of a conquered people, and exercising upon them, at every hour of the day, the most lawless cruelties. Here he beholds the roads crowded with wag-

ons, with stage coaches, with traders, with travellers, with merchandise passing from the fairs, with fabrics or products of the soil transported to them; while a populous village is found at every furlong on the high way. Cross the line; the climate is still the same, the soil grows not barren; on the contrary, as you proceed, the natural advantages multiply, the summers lengthen, the vine and the olive are at home, the perfume of the orange tree is borne upon the breeze, and the laurel hangs its lofty head by the way side, under the weight of its splendid flowers. But a curse is still on the land. No roads are found to traverse it, and nothing but a sorry pathway conducts you through it. The wheels of the husbandman's vehicle have left no traces on the soil, the plough has never turned up its surface. You are ready to forgive the want of thrift, by thinking you are really in an uninhabited land. But soon you will meet an assemblage of low cabins, scarcely raised above the level of the clay, of which they are built, and a few care worn drooping men going out from these to a little patch of stinted wheat. When you have reached what is called a town, you find it composed of buildings scarce superior to the village cabins, but overlooked by one palace, built in barbaric splendor; above, the residence of the tyrant; below, the prison house of his more immediate victims. The slender white towers, which rise around it, the only beautiful things of man's workmanship in sight, are not, as in the land you have left, the spires of christian churches, but the minarets of a false, cruel, bloody, faith; and the ghastly head, which you see near them on a pike, belonged perhaps to some christian priest, the victim of the barbarity or the caprice of the despot. This is no romantic contrast; it neither flatters the condition of society in christendom, nor vilifies it in the greater part of European Turkey. It is a true picture of the difference between a barbarous and a civilized, between a christian and an anti-christian country. It truly shows the influence of an uncivilized Mahometan despotism, palsying industry, dispiriting enterprize, confining the thoughts of man to the day's food, and blasting a fertile province. This then, it will be confessed, is a most afflicting phenomenon. Is it the result of necessity? must it needs be so? was it so from the beginning?

On the contrary, this same country was that which, beginning at a period beyond the reach of history, existed in independence and glory for a thousand years, and exhibited to the world a picture of as much perfection, as man in a state of heathenism can attain. It is a country, which was then a garden of plenty, a nursery of men, whose exploits excite our enthusiam after a lapse of so many ages, the abode of the geniuses first quoted, when we

are asked what great things human reason has done. It is a country even now, of which the greater part of the population profess that religion, which has carried civilization and with it improvement into the remotest corners of the earth, and who, even under the iron yoke of despotism, have given signal proofs of aptitude, enterprize and skill; who, though they dare not plough the earth, have ploughed the sea with greatest success, and who spare nothing in the education of their children, though there is no cause of honour and usefulness open before them.

What then enables their masters to hold them in slavery? Is the Turkish power as compact and solid as it is despotic? Far from it. It is universally known to be a disorganized and superannuated government, strong merely against a disarmed population, and mighty in the numerical force of barbarous thousands. Why then do not the neighbouring christian powers, England who in the Ionian islands approaches within six miles of the continent of Greece, and Austria and Russia, who have each a frontier of hundreds of miles on Turkey, why do not these christian, civilized powers say at once, that this state of things shall stop; that the Turks shall give up their conquests in Greece, some of which they have held but little more than a century?—It might have been answered, three years ago, that this would be an unasked interference. That reply cannot now be made. The christian, the civilized portion, and the great numerical majority of European Turkey, is in arms. They have for three years gallantly withstood the barbarous hordes of Asia minor and of Syria, and the fleets of the Algerine and Tunisian Robbers. They have formed a free government, and administered it successfully for two years, over the most important provinces of Greece and many of the islands. This new government invokes the aid of the christian powers. It is a lawful government, for it emanates from the people rising against a foreign conquering power, who have no title but force;—a power which supposed necessity alone has induced the states of Christendom to tolerate; and which has never governed itself, by the Christian laws of nations. How can the Christian powers excuse themselves for not interfering? It is but eight years since they sat in Congress at Vienna, and regulated the government of almost every state of Europe, dismembering two or three kingdoms, and erecting two or three others, because they thought that the peace and order of Europe required it. It is three years, since they sent their armies into Naples and Piedmont; and they have not yet evacuated Spain; with the internal state of all which countries the continental powers thought it their duty to interfere. We are not arguing as politicians *against* the principles of the holy

alliance, but we are arguing as men and Christians, *upon* their principles. We ask whether the whole cause of humanity, of civilization, of Christianity in Greece, which has been sacrificed, outraged, and oppressed by the Turkish government, is not object enough for their interference? Is not Mahometanism as bad as Jacobinism? Are not the Turks as bad as the *Carbonari?* Was the revolutionary constitution of Spain and Naples worse than the Turkish system of government? And was not the Turkish system of government imposed on Greece by military force; the circumstance which formed the great argument of the allied powers against the constitution of Spain?—We repeat, we speak now entirely on the principles of the allied powers. We are not maintaining the lawfulness of the Neapolitan revolution, of the Spanish revolution, or of the South American revolution; these all, we confess, were against the authority of civilized, Christian, kindred governments.—But surely, but surely, the Grecian revolution;—the population of a country against its strange conquerors, civilization against barbarism, and Christianity against Mahometanism; this is not such a revolution as the alliance is leagued to destroy. The Emperor Alexander says truly that he is placed, by Providence, at the head of 800,000 soldiers, and that he is responsible for the manner, in which he discharges this momentous, this awful trust. Our poor pages will never meet his imperial eye, nor that even of the humblest of his counsellors. If they could, we would say: "Providence has indeed put into your hands a military force, by which you can sway the fate of Europe. In the face of Europe and of the world, you have assumed this trust, as laid upon you by heaven. You have called the kings of the earth around you, and formed with them a covenant, to uphold the principles of the 'Christian faith.' The Christians of Greece are now calling to you for aid. A most piercing cry is daily coming up to you, from the oldest abodes of Christianity. The disciples of Jesus Christ, after three or four centuries of barbarous, merciless oppression from the chief anti-christian government, are asking for succour in their hourly prayers to that God, whose mightiest agent on earth, you declare yourself truly to be.—It is in your power now to act as you shall choose; to give the triumph to the crescent or the cross. If with your 800,000 christian soldiers you allow the false prophet to establish his despotism, no one on earth can gainsay you. Yet a few years only will pass, when you and your myriads will be called to account before God and in presence of his son, for the manner in which you have discharged one of the greatest trusts, ever committed to one man. If it heighten the obscurest individual's condemnation, that know-

ing his lord's will he neglected to do it, how solemnly does it import you, after confessing yourself the depository of an unresisted and unequalled power; after having used that power to control the affairs of so many nations; to be most conscientiously assured, that in refusing to exercise it in the cause of your Christian brethren in Greece, you are actuated by no worldly policy, no measures of state, but really and truly by the sacred principles you profess.'

ARTICLE XVI.

Poems. By George Bancroft. Cambridge, 1823. pp. 77.

It may seem to be departing a little from our usual province to offer any account of a volume of miscellaneous poetry. This little book, however, has claims on us, both on account of the author and its own merits. We have a right, if it is not a kind of duty, to take particular interest in the literary efforts of those who belong to the clerical profession: and besides, the production before us partakes so much of a religious character that nothing can be better suited to our pages than some extracts from it.

The longest piece in the collection is 'Rome,' a poem recited at Cambridge, on the last anniversary of the society Phi Beta Kappa. Its truly classical taste and spirit obtained for it full success with the cultivated audience, which that occasion always assembles; and it was this success, probably, that induced the author to go to his port folio, and choose out, from what he had written at different times while abroad, a few sketches of foreign scenery and home feelings, to accompany his "Pictures of Rome" before the public. A preface in verse describes the emotions of a very young man, just leaving the endearments of home; now crossing the sea, that is no longer to separate him from that old world, of which he has read and dreamed so much; and now setting his foot for the first time on a strange land. This introduces very aptly several small pieces, written as occasions suggested in Switzerland and Italy: and the main poem concludes both the book, and the poet's pilgrimage.

> The weary pilgrim to his home returns;
> For Freedom's air, for western climes he burns:
> Where dwell the brave, the generous and the free,
> O! there is Rome:—no other Rome for me. p. 77.

Thus there is a unity given to the work, though made up of small and disconnected materials, which adds not inconsidera-

bly to our interest in reading it. It is well planned, and has the several parts of it judiciously disposed. If it does not abound with the most sparkling offerings of the Muse, it yet displays the graces of a remarkably easy versification, and has much of that rare felicity of expression, which marks a refined taste. We speak of these in general, as its most conspicuous and distinguishing traits: but do not mean that the more eminent beauties of poetry are never attained. We are mistaken if there is no sublimity in the lines at 'Chamouny,' which are supposed to be spoken by the Genius of the Arveyron. We have room but for a few of them:

Where the monarch of hills rears his head to the skies,
And around him his ministers emulous rise,
Where the pine on the precipice laughs at the wind,
And Dru's haughty peak leaves the Eagle behind;

There the deep seas of ice hide in azure my source,
And there in the bosom of earth is my course;
Through the workshop (?) of nature unhinder'd I flow,
Mid her crystals of rock, and her crystals of snow.

'Tis there I have founded my castle's bright halls;
Its roof is of ice, and of ice its blue walls;
The Lauwine hath lent me his sheets for my doors;
With crystals and agates inlaid are my floors.

Though my roof melts away in the sun's summer blaze,
On the halls of my palace shall man never gaze;
For I call on the mountains to hide where I dwell,
And the avalanche tumbles and covers me well. p. 9.

There is a lively imagination also at sport in 'The Fairy of the Wengern Alp,' from which we quote the following passages:

Some hearkened to their mistress' call;
Some sported mid the heaps of snow;
Some glided with the waterfall;
Some sat above it's glittering bow,

Seeming o'er nature's works to muse;—
And some their little limbs arrayed;
These dew-drops for their mirror use;
Of light and air their robes are made.

And others bent with serious look
To prove the new made crystal's light;
While earth's dark substance others took,
And changed the mass to diamonds bright.

* * *

I saw the home of every wind;
And where the ocean's base is laid;
And where the earthquake sleeps confined,
Till Destiny demands its aid:

And where from magazines of snow
The mighty rivers foaming well;
And more than mortals e'er can know,
And more than fairy's tongue can tell.

What we love best, however, to praise in this volume is the moral beauty of it; its pure, affectionate and devout spirit. This offers us a better unity than that of subject; and we will venture to add, at the hazard of a smile from those who admire only passionate or gorgeous poetry,—is a more satisfying excellence than brilliant imagery, or the dark penciling, however skilfully performed, of what is wildest in men's experiences and hearts. There is a calm strain of feeling and contemplation flowing through, which, though not much calculated to excite the mind, has its own charm with it; and will perhaps please as long as the tones of more stirring compositions. The reader may here look in vain, it may well be, for any thing to astonish or enchant him. There are no appeals to his love for the glaring or the marvellous. There is no throwing out of uncommon thoughts. There are no strained flights, no burning words. The sentiments are throughout natural and simply expressed, without agitation, or metaphysics. But if he can be satisfied with thoughts such as evidently came without much seeking, and feelings such as spring up of their own accord in good hearts, conveyed in language rather chaste and clear than lofty, he will not find himself poorly entertained. If he is very fastidious, he will perhaps wish that the author had kept himself more out of sight; but then if he is reasonable, he will also consider the work as it is, a sort of poetical journal, in which the young traveller could not well have done otherwise. The spirit of these poems is so uniform, and the style so equally sustained, that we might select passages from every part of the volume, which would justify the encomiums now passed. We have room, however, for only one more extract.

MIDNIGHT AT THE FOUNTAIN OF TREVI.

The midnight stars are gleaming o'er me;
The Virgin's waters dash before me,
And glitter in the moon, that holy
And placid light sheds through the night,
And wakens melancholy.

Short-lived, like human hopes and troubles,
The gaudy crowd of silver bubbles
Float on in airy vanity;
Reflect the moon, then vanish soon,
An emblem of humanity.

The gathered waters shine as purely,
As hearts that rest on heaven securely,
And guileless love their duty:
Transparent flow the waves below,
Bright in their ruffled beauty.

As where the fountains rest collected,
The moon's mild purity's reflected,
So may my heart thus brightly
A mirror be, my God, to Thee,
And show thine image rightly. p. 43.

Mr. Bancroft will perhaps forsake poetry, in the arduous and most unpoetical duties, to which he has wholly devoted himself; but, if so, he may be content to have taken such leave of the muse. We wish him good success in the plan of instruction, which he has undertaken, and extend this wish most cordially to his colleague in the work,—a gentleman, who has done more than most of our scholars for the cause of books, though he has published none.

ARTICLE XVII.

Journal de la Société de la Morale Chrétienne. Tome premier.
Journal of the Society of Christian Morals. Vol. 1st and 2d.
Paris.

This Society was organized in December, 1821; at which time the *Duke de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt*, a name well known, was called to preside over the institution. We cannot better explain the intentions of this Society, than by giving an abstract of its prospectus, which was signed by all the original subscribers, and which is the basis of the labours and publications of its members.

'Though political science seems at present to occupy, too exclusively, those who reflect on the means of ameliorating the condition of mankind, and though there is a tendency to believe that the study and application of these sciences are sufficient for all the necessities of the human condition; yet, it is certain, that all the friends of truth have not the same exaggerated confidence in the effects of this social *mechanism*, and that many among them see the necessity of turning their attention, and that of their contemporaries,

towards sources of improvement more abundant, and which more immediately affect us. To this end we constantly meet with writings and efforts full of zeal, the success of which is a sufficient reply to the detracters of our age; and it cannot be denied, that the present period is more fruitful than any which has preceded it, in useful discoveries, in generous projects, and in charitable establishments. Many societies have been recently formed, in different christian countries, which labour with zeal and disinterestedness for the progressive civilization of mankind, and for the improvement of their moral and religious state. France has not remained a stranger to these laudable attempts. Useful associations have been formed in the capital, and in the departments, and what is most consoling is, that, wherever they have been created, men of various opinions, laying aside former prejudices, have united together; thinking, with reason, that their differences ought not to be an obstacle to any great good, in which Providence calls upon them to concur.

'Encouraged by these circumstances, and persuaded that most of the evils which mankind deplore, are the effects of their own mistakes concerning what is necessary to their happiness, many friends of humanity think that the time has arrived, when a society may be successfully established, which may unite its efforts to recal men to the only source of true happiness, namely, *to the precepts of Christianity*—precepts essentially the same, as those which the Creator has engraved in the hearts of all, but which Jesus Christ has developed, and presented in a luminous and attractive manner, and recommended by the most powerful motives; though, unhappily, they are too little known, too little respected, and, above all, too little followed. To interest men in the sacred code, which embraces these divine precepts, to inspire them with the desire of searching into them more diligently, and thus to conduct them to those sentiments of benevolence, which shall dispose them to abjure all bitterness, hatred, and dissension, to love one another, to treat each other as brethren, and, in fine, to seek and procure peace; what more delightful end could be proposed? what more noble employment and direction could be given to our means and efforts? Such are the ends of this infant Society, which is to take the title of the *Society of Christian Morals, having for its object the application of the precepts of Christianity to the social relations.*

'Some have condemned this title as being too vague, and embracing too many objects, not distinctly indicated. It must suffice, at present, to say to all who are animated by generous sentiments, and the noble desire to concur in solacing the evils and diminishing the vices which afflict mankind, that the society already exists; that it is composed, and will continue to be composed of members from all communions; one of the fundamental articles of the statutes declaring, that, in its proceedings, there shall be no question, except concerning truths on which different communions are agreed, and especially concerning the principles of that sacred morality, on

which the most bitter detracters of Christianity have been compelled to bestow their admiration: and that, in fine, the society will abstain from touching those points which have divided Christians, the discussion of which does not enter into the circle of its active duties. It will be perceived by the regulations, that whatever may give rise to discussions difficult in their nature, and contrary to the intentions of the Society, will be banished from its publications, and from all its proceedings. But in avoiding what the Apostle calls *foolish and unlearned questions, knowing that they do gender strifes*, (2 Tim. ii. 23) we shall insist so much the more on the sublime precepts of Christian morality, and upon the essential truths which serve as the basis for their support, concerning which there can be no dissension.'

'Persuaded that such a project cannot fail to be approved, and full of confidence in divine Providence, which is pleased to bless what is conceived with pious and charitable views, the founders of the Society trust that their hopes will be crowned with success; and they invite all who cherish the same sincere wishes for the good of mankind, to participate with them in their undertaking.'

We have never seen it more fully recognized, and it is what mankind ever have been, and still are very slow to realize, that Christianity is a great moral system; that it proclaims peace on earth and good will to men; and that its doctrines are of little value, separate from the moral ends, which are made the test of their importance. Here are no reproachful allusions to Papists or Protestants—no revival of names which have set a nation on fire—of *Jansenist*, *Jesuit*, or *Huguenot*. Equally free is the language of this *prospectus* from degraded views of human nature. While it avoids exalting dogmas above duties, it boasts not of the blessings of ignorance, as if it were the mother of devotion. It treats mankind as beings in every respect worthy to be enlightened, and capable of forming opinions and exercising conscience for themselves. There is much in what we have now cited, and throughout this journal, to exalt our opinion of the present character and condition, and to encourage our hopes of the growing liberality and elevation, of the French people. When was it before in France, (and how rare has it been in any country) that christians of different communions acted together for any purpose, in which Christianity was the professed basis of their operations? This enlightened toleration is one of the best evidences of religious and moral improvement. And never, says a writer in the *Journal*, did a spirit of religion shew itself more generally, or more free from superstition and intolerance, than at this time. 'I do not fear to affirm,' says *M. Mahul*, 'that the people of France are religious.' He does not, indeed, attempt to conceal the fact, that there is much wickedness, as well in high places as in low; but he instances, in several particulars, a

state of improvement in his country, which is highly favourable to the present period, compared with times past. Luxury and prodigality are more rare; they are not fashionable vices; and individual bounty is more frequently bestowed on religious, patriotic, and benevolent establishments. The world has lost much of its delusions, and domestic life has recovered much of its charms. The misfortunes of the revolution have not been without their moral use; and the people who have witnessed the frightful excesses of licentiousness, fanaticism, and party spirit, have awakened to a sober fear of God. The young, especially those removed from the city, and those who belong to the universities, offer the consoling spectacle of a sensible amelioration of morals; never was the taste for pleasure and dissipation more restrained; never was there such a thirst for knowledge and wisdom.

'But it is principally,' says *M. Mahul*, 'in all that is public, national, or popular, that the religious character of our age is manifest. I speak not of the acts of government, on which the impress of religion is more or less distinctly marked; but I would rather speak of the general state of things, and of the national morals of the French in their public meetings and solemnities. Thus, for example, it seems to me particularly worthy of remark, that in the midst of the most animated legislative debates, touching the merits of different religious establishments, the language of opposition, so naturally tending to excess, has never swerved from the respect due to sacred things. Religion, its doctrines, its worship, its morals, and its ministers, have never been the subjects of a single word of derision or irreverence. In approaching these delicate discussions, the orators, on both sides of the house, have commenced with protestations of the most profound respect and inviolable attachment to religion.

'A sign equally unequivocal of the religious spirit of our age is the brilliant success of different works consecrated to the defence or illustration of the principles of religion. Few people, in the last century, except theologians and ecclesiastics, read religious works. If the laity undertook to examine into sacred things, it was done exclusively through the writings of Voltaire and the Encyclopedists; but now, on the contrary, who does not read the *Genius of Christianity?* And if the reader does not imbibe all the *opinions* of its author, yet no one can be insensible to the eloquent attractions of that religious *feeling* which he displays. The study of biblical and ecclesiastical history, was, not long since, abandoned to theologians by profession; men of letters disdained it. Voltaire astonished those of his age, more than he charmed them, by the specimens of bold erudition that he drew from that forsaken mine. But now, what well educated man does not place the highest value on a knowledge of the histories and morals of the Old and New Testament? Never were there formed in greater numbers, and with more ardent zeal, asso-

ciations truly christian, intended to propagate through the world the morality of the gospel, to promote peace, to distribute the scriptures, and to diffuse that elementary knowledge, which raises man above the brute, and enables him to become a good christian and a good citizen.

'Some persons, in their political speculations, have supposed that a great portion of the French people is indifferent or averse to religion. But this is a great error. There was no greater mistake in the revolution, considered merely in a political point of view, than the odious persecution of christians, in regard to their worship. Nothing alienated more persons; and that, which the loss of any privilege or prerogative, and even of property, did not produce, was effected by the violation of religion; it was that which engendered the civil war. No act of the political life of Bonaparte, whatever were his motives, was more politic, and secured him more partisans, than the restoration of the forms of worship in 1802. Ye who think that religion has a feeble and superficial hold on the French, do you not remember how recently she produced a host of martyrs? Have you forgotten how lately she resisted a domination before which the boldest potentates bowed? To estimate the power of religion over the minds of the French, it is necessary to appreciate it by comparison. Observe, for instance, with what difficulty the citizens are drawn to the elections, once in five years, and to the municipal council five or six times a year. Nothing can be less painful or hazardous than these duties; they have also something stimulating, in as much as they excite the spirits of the parties; and something flattering by their positive influence, and by the effects they produce on the object towards which they are exercised. But, in spite of all these circumstances, nearly a third of the electors are habitually absent from the electoral colleges, and, in most of the provincial towns, the municipal councils are perpetually embarrassed, for want of a sufficient number of members to carry on their deliberations. See, on the contrary, the power of religion: that which politics cannot obtain, a few times in a year, and from a chosen number of men, religion obtains, at least every seventh day, from whole masses of the population. In fact, go through France on the sabbath, and, from the most opulent and industrious places, to the meanest hamlet, you will find an immense majority of the people abandoning their accustomed labours and occupations, clothed in their best apparel, surrounding the altar that is decked with mean or slovenly simplicity, or standing before the pulpit, which is occupied for the most part by a priest of ordinary talents, whence his oft repeated words resound from week to week. Certainly the public worship of christians is in itself little attractive; its perpetual repetitions are at least monotonous; it demands from the indigent some sacrifices; yet few contemn it, few withdraw from its observances, and many find in it their purest joy and consolation. Yes, the power of religion is still greater among this people; it is the

strongest moving cause of their actions. Ye who hesitate to grant this, would you without remorse have the benedictions of heaven withdrawn from your conjugal union? and when you shall be blessed with children, should you be able to bear, without pain, the idea of being deprived of the baptismal waters? No; because you yourselves are identified with this people, and submissive to the empire of a religion, whose yoke you vainly suppose it would be easy to shake off.'

Abating even as much as can be reasonably required for national partiality, the representation here given of the state of religion and morals in France, is more favourable than we have been wont to believe. But countenanced as it is by a society so highly respectable, and whose object it is to do what can be done for the cause of christian morality, it is not to be supposed that it contains any great exaggeration. Founded on such a broad basis of charity, as we have seen, it may readily be conceived, that the society would find some opponents among the catholics, who would be apt to think that a union, professedly on christian grounds, between protestants and papists, would be to concede too much to the former: that it would be at least to acknowledge them as christians, if it did not go far to countenance them as members of a true church. Accordingly some individuals among the Roman catholics blamed the conduct of those belonging to their church, who had thus associated themselves with members of other christian communions. This induced *M. Llorente*, one of the council of administration, on his own account, and in behalf of other Roman Catholics who belonged to the society of Christian morals, to make a communication in their defence,—a defence alike independent and conciliating.

'Why is it,' he inquires, 'that some individuals of the Romish church speak in the manner they do, of the conduct of their co-religionists, merely because they have co-operated with members of other communions? Charity to our neighbour, and the precepts which it imposes, have not been objects of controversy among different christian communions, for more than three centuries. I know not the motive for censuring the union of a Roman christian with christians of a different communion, for a common object, and one so worthy of all men who profess that evangelical morality, which our divine master Jesus Christ promulgated, in order that it might be practised by all christians, that is by all who shall acknowledge the gospel as the fundamental law of morals, and who are not contented with a philosophical morality founded only in the laws of nature, and interpreted by philosophers instead of christians'

After some remarks, in which he professes that he and his catholic associates consider themselves justified in the course they have adopted by 'the literal sense of the sacred scriptures,'

M. Llorente proceeds to examine those texts, which guard the true christian against heretics, and to shew their inapplicability to protestants as a body; citing also those passages which command mutual forbearance and brotherly love. All this is done with perfect deference to his own church; and he concludes by saying:

'It is sufficient for me to know, that neither Jesus Christ, nor the Apostles, nor my church forbid me to associate with religious, pious, and charitable christians, although they follow, as to certain doctrines, an opinion opposite to mine; since that difference does not hinder our co-operation in works of charity. Not only is it not forbidden, but, on the contrary, the first law of Christianity (which is charity) commands me to unite with such a society, since it affords me occasion and means of doing good, that I could not enjoy by myself, or when united only with other Catholics, who had not the opportunities which the Society of Christian morals possesses, to spread the good doctrine through the known world.

'*Do unto others*, my divine master commands me, *as you would that they should do unto you, for this is the law and the prophets.* And when he sees fit to explain what classes of men are happy, he affords us the pleasure and the consolation of saying without any restriction: *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.*

'*I will have mercy and not sacrifice*, said he; and as if that were not sufficient, when he heard the censure which certain Pharisees cast on the Apostles for plucking and eating the ears of corn, on the sabbath day, he added: *If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.*

'I would not be too curious in searching for the intentions of those who have manifested displeasure in consequence of the union of catholics with protestants, in a society founded in charity. I have already supposed them sincere in their errour; I would only say to them: "I pray you for the love of Jesus Christ, fix your attention on the texts of sacred scripture that I have cited, and on many others that you know perhaps better than I; and I trust, not only, that you will not continue to censure our union, (which may be the origin of many other associations equally useful) but that you yourselves will become members of our society, and inspire the same disposition in other persons of the same communion."'

We have made these liberal extracts to shew what must be gratifying to every liberal and enlightened christian; namely, the truly evangelical spirit which inspires many distinguished men in France, belonging to the two great divisions of the church. Such a spirit, notwithstanding it is shewn by *M. Llorente* that its exercise in co-operation with protestants is not in-

consistent with his fidelity to his own church, forms a new era in its history. Never before was the same liberality shewn, to any great extent; and the partition wall must have become exceedingly weakened, when so many distinguished members of a once *infallible* church are allowed to vindicate their union with other christians, for the highest christian purposes. We lament the decease of *M. Llorente*, which took place not long after his communication was published in the journal. He was a distinguished ecclesiastic during a great part of his life, and was always sincerely attached to his church; but, above all, he was an advocate of toleration from principle. Thus he was, in its proper sense, a member of the true catholic church; for he was not afraid to call every good man, of every christian communion,—a christian. Priestcraft must quail when she is approached by men so enlightened and benevolent, and at the same time so religious. Where she bears the greatest sway, learning stands aloof, or takes refuge in chilling infidelity. But we delight to hail every advance in toleration, believing that it will be attended with some proportional advances in religion.

We have occupied so much room in showing the *general* spirit which pervades the Society of Christian Morals, that we are able only to name, in conclusion, some of the particular objects, to which its attention has been directed.

At the General Annual Meeting, 17th April, 1823, *M Remusat*, one of the Secretaries, made a report of the past doings of the Society; premising, that, in consequence of its infancy, he came rather to speak of what was designed, than of what had been accomplished. After speaking of the legitimate influence of Christianity on morals, and denying every thing sectarian in the Society, he claims for it the merit of being a new attempt at association, in a country where the principle of association is little known, and slow in its operation. He proceeds to mention what had been done for the well being of the Society, and names some of the particular objects which had employed the attention of the council. At the meeting of the 8th April, *Joseph Price*, one of the English Society of Friends, was present, and called the attention of the council to the consideration of the best *moral* means of effectually abolishing the *Slave Trade*. A committee was accordingly appointed for that purpose, and a report made by *Baron de Stael*. It is highly gratifying as well as propitious to the cause of humanity, to find as we do, from this report and from other movements of the Society, that it is bringing into close alliance and zealous co-operation, not only the greatest philanthropists, but also individuals of the highest

rank and greatest influence, in France and England; promising something, we hope, for the cause of peace, and for the extinction of those national antipathies, which have so long existed between those great rival countries. It appears further, from the report of M. Remusat that a committee was chosen to inquire into the state and management of *prisons*, and to report what measures it was in the power of the Society to take on the subject. Again, the same report goes on to say, that the fear of encountering a prejudice in some sort sanctioned by the laws, has not prevented the council from appointing a committee for the breaking up of *gaming* and *lottery houses*. The committee has confined its labours, on this subject, to the propagation of such writings, in the journals of the Society and otherwise, as are best adapted to weaken in the people a habit so unfriendly to industry and good morals. The *Religious Tract Society* presented to the committee a thousand copies of the *Lottery*, (La Lotterie) for distribution, and offered two prizes for essays on given subjects. A committee was also raised for the co-operation of young men in humane establishments and acts of philanthropy. Lastly, under the direction of the council, a subscription was opened for the fugitive Greeks, resident in France, to enable them to return to their country.

Such is the account of what has been attempted and planned by this infant Society. The various subjects here mentioned are accompanied with remarks, which are replete with good sense; and with appeals to the christian philanthropist, in a strain of simple eloquence, which exaggerates nothing, and points, without direct crimination of his countrymen for existing evils, or what is left undone, to the way of the most honorable renown, namely, to the united service of God and man. There is, throughout, a benevolence of sentiment regarding persons and institutions, rising above the prejudices of every thing local and national; and the report concludes with a grateful acknowledgment to various societies, which have testified their esteem and good will.

INTELLIGENCE.

Evangelical Missionary Society.— Donations and contributions to the Evangelical Missionary Society, in Mass.: as extracted from the Treasurer's report, presented to the Society, in October last.

From Dr. Bancroft's society, Worcester	$48 00
Dr. Lowell's, Boston	75 75
Dr. Pierce's, Brookline	50 86
Dr. Prince's, Salem	31 00
Mr. Brazer's do.	60 67
Female Sewing Society in Dr. Lowell's parish	17 75
Female Benevolent Society in Princeton	10 00
Nantucket Reading Society, as a life subscription for their Pastor, Rev. S. Swift	16 00
Concord Cent Society	5 00
Pupils in Mr. Mandell's Academy, Dorchester	12 56
Through the Rev. Dr. Thayer of Lancaster, from a friend in Lancaster	1 56
Social Circle, Northboro'	10 00
Contribution of a Society of Ladies in Barre	10 51

INSTALLATION.

On Wednesday, Nov. 5th, Rev. Samuel J. May, who for about a year and a half previous had been labouring as an evangelist in the town of Brooklyn, Conn. was installed pastor of the first church and society in that place. The installing council was composed of delegations from churches in Providence, R. I. and Boston, Worcester, Lancaster, Petersham, Charlestown, and Springfield, Mass. Dr. Bancroft, of Worcester, was moderator of the council, and Dr. Lowell of Boston, scribe. In the services of installation, Rev. Mr. Willson, of Petersham, offered the introductory, Rev. Dr. Bancroft, of Worcester, the consecrating, and Rev. Mr. Packman, of Boston, the concluding prayer. Rev. Mr. Walker, of Charlestown, preached the sermon; Rev. Dr. Thayer, of Lancaster, addressed the people; Rev. Dr. Freeman, of Boston, gave the charge, and Rev. Mr. Peabody, of Springfield, the right hand of fellowship. We have felt a strong sympathy with this interesting society in their past trials, and cordially congratulate them on their truly encouraging prospects.

ORDINATION.

On Wednesday, Dec. 17th, Rev. Orville Dewey was ordained to the pastoral care of the first Congregational Church and Society, in New-Bedford. The order of services was as follows: Introductory prayer by Rev. Mr. Goodwin, of Sandwich; sermon by Rev. Mr. Tuckerman, of Chelsea, from Hebrews I. 1. 2; consecrating prayer by Rev. Mr. Ripley, of Waltham; charge by Rev. Mr. Kendall, of Plymouth; fellowship of the churches, by Rev. Mr. May, of Brooklyn, Conn. and concluding prayer by Rev. Mr. Swift, of Nantucket.

In Mr. Dewey's departure to this sphere of duty we lose a highly valued fellow-labourer. We affectionately commend him to the divine blessing, and the kindness of those to whose service he devotes himself.

TO READERS.

We notice two important *errata* in our fourth number of this volume. On page 250, in the first line of the article entitled 'Reasonableness of glorying in the Gospel,' for *heaven* should be read *honour*; and on page 295, line 28, for *India* should be read *Judea*.

According to a notice given in the last number, our work will hereafter bear the title of 'The Christian Examiner and Theological Review.' We solicit the aid of its friends in extending its circulation. Communications are to be addressed to Oliver Everett, the publisher, at No. 13, Cornhill.

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